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ED raids portal for online betting on LS polls results

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BUSINESS

Dhanteras sees sale of jewellery worth ₹30,000 cr

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India beat NZ to win women's ODI

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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100 FLIGHTS GET BOMB THREATS ON TUESDAY

NEW DELHI/ MUMBAI, 29 OCT

More than 100 flights operated by various Indian airlines received bomb threats on Tuesday, according to sources.

In 16 days, over 510 domestic and international flights have got the threats that later turned out to be hoaxes. The threats were issued mostly through social media.

Air India received threats for around 36 flights and IndiGo for about 35 flights. Vistara received the threats for 32 flights, the sources in the know said. Meanwhile, the Mumbai police have registered a case against an unidentified person after three airlines received bomb threats on their X handle, an official said on Tuesday.

'Nagpur man behind threats'

Police in Maharashtra's Nagpur have identified a 35-year-old man from Gondia in the state as the person behind a spate of hoax bomb threats that triggered panic, caused flight delays and led to increased security at airports and other establishments, an official said.

The police identified the man as Jagdish Uikey, an author of a book on terrorism, who was arrested in 2021 in a case, he said.

Uikey sent emails to various

government bodies, including the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Railway Minister, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputy, airline offices, the Director General of Police (DGP) and the Railway Protection Force (RPF), an official said.

On Monday, the Nagpur police stepped up security outside Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis's residence in the city after Uikey sent an email threatening to protest unless given a chance to present his information on the secret terror code he claimed to have deciphered. He also requested a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss his knowledge of terror threats, he added. Uikey's email sent on October 21 to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, and also forwarded to the DGP and RPF, led to security measures at railway stations, the official said. *—PTI*

Telangana govt's caste survey to begin from 6 Nov

HYDERABAD, 29 OCT

Telangana government's social economic and caste survey would begin from 6 November, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said on Tuesday. At least 80,000 government employees will be roped in for conducting the survey. As per Congress government's decision to conduct the caste survey, the Telangana Commission for Backward Classes on Monday kicked off its public hearings to receive representations from interested parties. Following the decision taken at a meeting held by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy recently, the deadline for submitting the data is 9 December. *—PTI*

Kassem to lead Hezbollah after Nasrallah's death

BEIRUT, 29 OCT

Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group on Tuesday said it chose Naim Kassem to replace its slain leader Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike last month. Kassem, a long-time deputy to Nasrallah, has served as the militant group's acting leader since Nasrallah's death. The group said in a statement that Hezbollah's decision-making Shura Council elected Kassem, who had been Nasrallah's deputy leader for over three decades, as the new secretary-general. Hezbollah vowed to continue with Nasrallah's policies "until victory is achieved". *—PTI*

12 killed as bus rams into flyover wall in Rajasthan

JAIPUR, 29 OCT

Twelve people died and around 30 passengers got injured after a private bus crashed into the wing wall of a flyover in Rajasthan's Sikar district on Tuesday afternoon, police said. District Superintendent of Police Bhuvan Bhushan Yadav said the bus coming from Salasar rammed into a part of the flyover in Laxmangarh while taking a turn. According to the police, the bus was speeding and filled with passengers due to which the driver lost control and the vehicle rammed into the wing wall of the flyover. The right side of the bus got completely crushed and the driver died on the spot. A crane was called to take out the passengers stuck inside, they said. *—PTI*

NCB seizes 2.7 kg drugs worth Rs 27 cr in Chennai

CHENNAI, 29 OCT

Narcotics Control Bureau on Tuesday said it has seized 2.7 kg of Methamphetamine, worth Rs 27 crore, and arrested two men including a Sri Lankan national, an inmate of a refugee camp who intended trafficking it to his home country. Further, Rs 15 lakh in cash was seized in this connection, the anti-narcotics agency said. Based on a tip-off, the NCB Chennai zone said it intercepted two men, identified later as Vijaykumar and Manivannan, near a bus stand here on October 22 and seized 1.9 kg of Methamphetamine from their possession, an official release said. Of the two men, Vijaykumar is a Sri Lankan residing in a Kanyakumari refugee camp who travelled to Chennai to take custody of the consignment with an intention of trafficking it to Sri Lanka. *—PTI*

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150 injured in Kerala Temple cracker blast

Victims suffer 80% burn injuries, 22 critical

KASARAGOD, 29 OCT

A fire accident during a Theyyam performance at a temple near Neeleswaram late last night left 154 people injured, eight of them seriously, when firecrackers stored in the vicinity exploded, police said on Tuesday.

Kasargod District Police chief D Shilpa announced the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe into the fire accident.

The district administration said that the additional divisional magistrate has been directed to carry out an inquiry separately.

The incident happened at Anjoottanbalam Veererkavu Temple near Neeleswaram.

Nileswaram police registered a case under the Explosive Substance Act.

The firecrackers were burst in the temple premises without any legal permission, and the accident happened due to its careless handling and negligence by the accused, police said.

Eight people were booked, and four of them were taken into custody, police said.

Though police earlier said that all those booked are temple committee members, they later clarified that one among them is a local man who burst firecrackers.

The incident occurred as hundreds of people, including women and children, had gathered to have a glimpse of the Theyyam performance at the shrine.

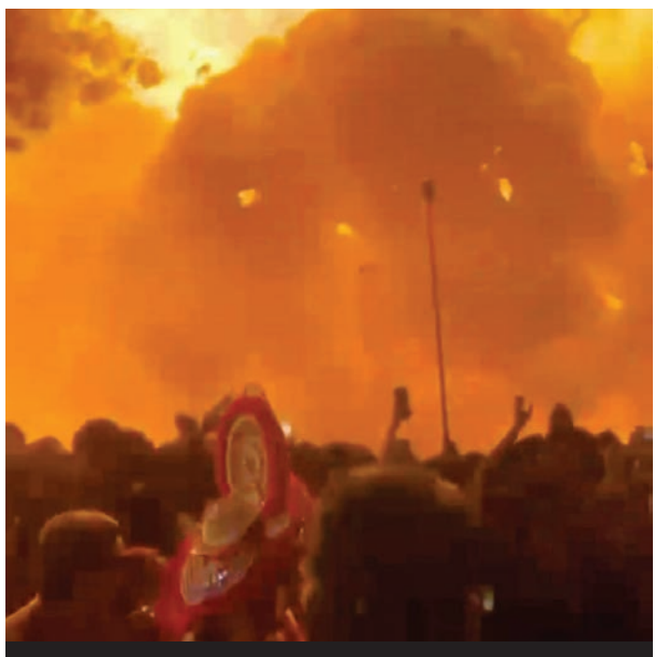


PHOTO: PTI

It is suspected that the accident occurred when a fireworks storage facility near the Veerarkavu Temple in Kasargod caught fire

Theyyam is a centuries-old ritualistic performance held at temples and 'kavus' (sacred groves) in the Malabar (north Kerala) region of Kerala.

The District Collector said that those who were seriously injured had 80 per cent burns.

He further said that according to a preliminary probe, the fireworks storage facility and the place where the crackers were being burst were close by.

A total of 21 people admitted to the intensive care units, seven are under ventilator support, and one person is critically ill.

Lok Sabha member Raj Mohan Unnithan said about 1,500 people participated.

"Over 10,000 people were expected to take part in the continuing rituals at the temple on Tuesday. If the accident happened today, what would have been its gravity?," he told TV channels. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Ayushman Bharat extended for all citizens over 70 yrs

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday launched development projects worth nearly Rs 12,850 crore and extended his government's flagship health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat to all senior citizens aged 70 years and above.

The major push in the health sector was unveiled on the occasion of the ninth Ayurveda Day and the birth anniversary of Dhanvantari, the Hindu god of medicine.

Modi also inaugurated phase II of India's first All India Institute of Ayurveda in the national capital which includes a Panchakarma hospital, an Ayurvedic pharmacy for drug manufacturing, a sports medicine unit, a central library, an IT and startup incubation centre, and a 500-seat auditorium among others.

He also launched a helicopter emergency medical service from AIIMS Rishikesh, which will help deliver medical care speedily.

PHOTO: UNSPLASH

Modi launched a U-WIN portal that seeks to benefit pregnant women and infants by fully digitising the vaccination process. It will ensure timely administration of life-saving vaccines to pregnant women and children (from birth to 16 years) against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases. Modi hit out at Delhi and West Bengal governments on Tuesday for not implementing the Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme due to "political interests" *—PTI*

Irregularities in H'yana poll: EC snubs Cong

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Election Commission on Tuesday rejected allegations levelled by Congress over irregularities in the just-held Haryana Assembly polls, saying the party was raising "the smoke of a generic doubt" about the credibility of an entire electoral outcome like it did in the past.

"This is least expected of a national political party. The commission appreciates the criticality of the considered views of political parties in sustaining and strengthening electoral democracy in the country and assures that it will remain committed towards timely grievance redressal," it said in a letter to Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge.

The poll authority said that "once again", it was compelled to note that with "no evidence whatsoever" of any statutory electoral step being compromised, the Congress has "once again raised the smoke of a generic doubt" about the credibility of an entire electoral outcome "exactly in a similar manner as it has done in recent past".

"At the same time, the commission sincerely urges INC to take firm and concrete steps, matching with the party's long and illustrious standing, to amend their ... approach...," it added.he commission said that such "frivolous and unfounded" doubts have the potential of creating "turbulence" when crucial steps like polling and counting are in live play, a time when both public and political parties' anxiousness is peaking. *—PTI*

India gets app for birth, death registration

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday launched a mobile application for seamless and hassle-free registration of birth and death at the click of a button.

The Civil Registration System (CRS) mobile app, prepared by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, is expected to significantly reduce the time required for the registration of birth and death.

The CRS app will showcase births and deaths on the home screen. The hamburger icon on the top-left corner will pull up the menu, allowing the user to navigate to options like Birth, Death, Still Bith, Adoption, Profile, and Add/View Payment Details.

To register a birth, registrars need to tap on "Birth" to expand related options and tap on "Register Birth", following which they will be required to fill required details, such as date of birth, address, and family details of the child.

The certificate is generated once the user completes the payment process.

Yash's film in row over tree cutting

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Tuesday directed officials concerned to take disciplinary action against those who permitted felling of trees in a forest land here, where a set was erected for shooting a Kannada movie titled 'Toxic'. He also conducted a spot inspection of the site where the shooting of the movie 'Toxic', starring actor Yash, was held. In a note to Additional Chief Secretary of Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment, he said a total of 599 acres of reserve forest in Bengaluru's Peenya plantation 1 and plantation 2 is gazetted, which was illegally handed over to HMT (Hindustan Machine Tools) in the 1960s without de-notification.

The Minister also noted that the land that is in HMT's possession without de-notification is a forest. Khandre said that it has come to his notice that HMT is also renting out the forest land in its possession for film shootings. —PTI

SIKKIM'S SKM WINS 2 SEATS UNCONTESTED AFTER SDF CANDIDATES WITHDRAW

GANGTOK, 29 OCT

In a surprise move, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) aspirants Prem Bahadur Bhandari and Daniel Rai on Tuesday withdrew their candidature from Soreng-Chakung and Namchi-Singhithang Assembly constituencies, paving the way for the uncontested victories of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) nominees Aditya Golay and Satish Chandra Rai. Bhandari withdrew his papers from the Soreng-Chakung seat, leaving SKM's Aditya Golay as the lone candidate in fray for the 13 November bypoll. Rai withdrew his candidature from Namchi-Singhithang, allowing SKM's Satish Chandra Rai to secure victory without contest. *—PTI*

AVOID TRAFFIC JAMS

Ahead of festivities, cops urge Bengalureans to stay safe

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

As the festive season approaches with Deepavali and Kannada Rajyotsava, the Bengaluru Traffic Police are urging residents to prepare for significant traffic congestion throughout the city due to the long weekend from 31 October to 3 November. To minimise delays, the police advise road users to plan ahead, familiarise themselves with alternate routes, and use public transport wherever possible.

Police Dayanand issued crucial guidelines aimed at ensuring a safe and eco-friendly Deepavali celebration. With an annual average of 150 to 200 firecracker-related incidents, the police are emphasising the importance of safety.

KEY GUIDELINES INCLUDE

- Eco-friendly firecrackers: Verify green crackers' authenticity by scanning QR codes at the point of sale.
- Children's safety: Parents are reminded to prevent their children from handling firecrackers.
- Designated areas: Firecrackers are banned in crowded areas and may only be used between 8pm and 10pm.
- Animal welfare considerations: Residents to be mindful of the impact of noise pollution on animals.
- Post-celebration cleanliness: Clean firecracker debris to maintain public safety and hygiene.
- Purchase from licensed vendors: Firecrackers to be bought from authorised vendors with proper licenses.
- Noise control: The use of crackers with excessive noise is discouraged.
- Safety precautions: Residents are advised to wear protective gear and fire extinguisher.
- Incident reporting: Contact emergency services by calling 112 or 108 during accidents.

JET ENGINES DELAY: INDIA TO SLAP FINES ON US FIRM

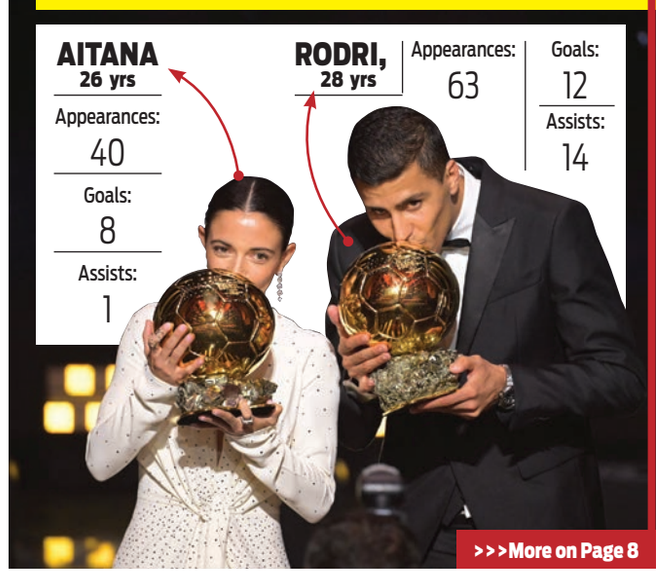
NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Facing a delay of more than 18 months in the supply of aero-engines from General Electric (GE), the Ministry of Defence has invoked a penalty clause against the US aerospace giant. Sources said the penalty clause had to be invoked as there was no other option left.

GE is learnt to have told the Indian side that one its South Korean suppliers that manufactures parts of the engine was facing a crisis, which had delayed the supply of aero-engines. The US firm has promised to start supplying 24 engines each year from April 2025. In 2021, GE had signed a $716 million contract with HAL to supply 99 F404-GE-IN20 engines for the Tejas Mark-1A jets. *—Agencies*

RODRI, BONMATI WIN BALLON D'OR

Spanish midfielders Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí won the men's and women's Ballon d'Or award for the world's best soccer player.



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HC halts probe, orders release of Pralhad Joshi

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

The Karnataka High Court has issued an interim stay on the investigation into a criminal case involving Gopal Joshi, brother of Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, along with his son Ajay Joshi and associate Vijayalakshmi. The court also ordered their release from police custody. Justice M Nagaprasanna issued the stay while hearing the petition from the three accused, who were recently detained following a complaint by Sunita Chavan, spouse of former MLA Devanand Phool Singh Chavan. The complaint alleged cheating and breach of trust, claiming that the accused had taken Rs two crore, promising to secure a BJP ticket for the Lok Sabha elections, but did not fulfill their commitment. *—PTI*

Police raid Kolar gold mines, warn crime doers

KOLAR, 29 OCT

Four teams of police personnel led by KGF Superintendent of Police (SP) KM Shantharaju conducted simultaneous raids on the house of rowdy sheeters in KGF to ascertain their behaviour and to understand whether they are still taking part in unlawful activities. Over 11 police officers including Deputy Superintendent of police (DSP) S Panduranga and about 42 police personnel took part in the raids that were conducted on the houses of 27 rowdies in KGF early on Tuesday. During the raids the police officers warned the rowdies against taking part in unlawful and illegal activities and to keep them away from such activities. The police officers told them that stern action would be initiated against them if they were found indulging in anti-social activities. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: SALAR

Night patrol officer injured in Kolar knife attack

KOLAR, 29 OCT

An Assistant Sub Inspector, Fareeda Banu, sustained injuries to both hands during a midnight attack by a suspect in Bangarpet, Kolar district. The incident occurred around 1 pm on Tuesday while Banu was on night patrol with a home guard. They noticed a young man acting suspiciously near Adarsha College and approached him for questioning. The suspect, identified as Ajay Singh from Jharkhand, brandished a knife and attempted to assault Banu. In her attempt to protect herself, she suffered knife wounds to her hands. The accompanying home guard intervened, overpowering Singh, who was also injured in the process. Both Banu and Singh were taken to a hospital in Bangarpet for treatment, along with the home guard. KGF Superintendent of Police KM Shantharaju reported that four additional police personnel were in the vicinity and arrived promptly, leading to Singh's arrest. *—Salar News*

Kolar doctor nabbed for sex determination tests

KOLAR, 29 OCT

The health department authorities of Kolar district conducted a 'Decoy operation' to bust a sex determination exercise at the Deepak Nursing Home, near Dasarahosahalli in Bangarpet taluk. According to Dr Chandan Kumar, the District Family Welfare officer there were certain complaints against Dr Sarasaswathi of the nursing home that she was conducting sex determination at the scan centre attached to the nursing home. To curb the illegal activity, the district health authorities decided to conduct a 'Decoy operation' and took into confidence one pregnant woman and sent her to the scanning centre for check-up and the scanning was scheduled for today. *—Salar News*

1-man commission formed for SC internal quota

Siddaramaiah says the commission will submit its report within three months

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during the inaugural function for the 21st Livestock (domestic animal) Census in Bengaluru on Tuesday *PHOTO: SALAR*

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said a one man commission will soon be formed to gather empirical data for providing internal reservation among Scheduled Castes (SC).

"We have decided regarding internal reservation at the cabinet yesterday. In principle we have agreed to provide internal reservation. A one man commission of a retired High Court judge will be formed, he will have to submit the report in three months," Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said: "A few are of the opinion that there is no empirical data." A section of SCs, especially 'SC Left', have been demanding internal reservation alleging that only a few influential sub-castes were taking away a majority of the benefits while many communities were still marginalised.

Just ahead of Assembly polls, the previous BJP government's cabinet had taken a decision on internal reservation, by recommending to the central government a six per cent internal quota for SC (Left), 5.5 per cent for SC (Right), 4.5 per cent for "touchables" (Banjara, Bhovi, Korcha, Kuruma etc) and one per cent for others.

The cabinet's decision on Monday was in the backdrop of a landmark verdict delivered by the Supreme Court on 1 August, which held that states are constitutionally empowered to make sub-classifications within the SCs, which form a socially heterogeneous class, for granting reservation for the uplift of castes that are socially and educationally more backward.

"The commission will be given terms of reference. Other than recruitments for which notifications have already been issued, for the rest of the recruitments notifications will not be issued (till the internal reservation is provided)," he said. *—PTI*

Opposition leaders R Ashoka with BY Vijayendra take part in Unity Run, to mark the birth anniversary of Vallabhbhai Patel *PHOTO: SALAR*

CONGRESS IS NOT HONEST ON INTERNAL RESERVATION: VIJAYENDRA

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Karnataka BJP President BY Vijayendra on Tuesday said that Congress government in the state and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah were not honest on internal reservation among SCs and were only trying to use the issue for politics ahead of bypolls for three Assembly segments.

The Karnataka Cabinet on Monday gave its consent to provide internal reservation among Scheduled Castes (SC) and decided to constitute a commission under a retired High Court judge that will be tasked with collecting empirical data. He said, "BJP has repeatedly made it clear on the subject, but Siddaramaiah wanted to politicise this." *—PTI*

CM warns officials not meeting tax targets

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday warned that officials failing to meet the commercial tax collection targets will be held accountable.

The State has set a commercial tax collection target of Rs 1,10,000 crore for 2024-25. As of October end, Rs 58,773 crore has been collected, comprising GST of Rs 44,783 crore, Karnataka Sales Tax of Rs 13,193 crore and Professional Tax of Rs 797 crore, the Chief Minister's office said.

The State has achieved 53.5 per cent of the target so far. Compared to the same period last year, the collection has increased by Rs 5,957 crore, it said, adding that to meet the yearly target by March, Rs10,200 crore per month needs to be collected over the next five months.

Siddaramaiah stressed the need for coordinated efforts, saying, "achieving the target is essential for the state's development." He announced that he would conduct monthly reviews and reiterated that any official not meeting the target will be held accountable.

- The excise tax collection target for 2024-25 is Rs 38,525 crore. As of 28 October, the department has collected Rs 20,237 crore, achieving 52.53 per cent of the target

He further said that the 'Karasamadhana' scheme is expected to bring in an additional Rs 2,000 crore. Later reviewing the Excise Department's tax collection, Siddaramaiah instructed the department to take strict measures to prevent illegal liquor smuggling from Goa and meet the March deadline for the target.

The excise tax collection target for 2024-25 is Rs 38,525 crore. As of 28 October, the department has collected Rs 20,237 crore, achieving 52.53 per cent of the target. *—PTI*

'BJP spreading misinfo on Waqf land'

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Karnataka Industries Minister MB Patil on Tuesday accused BJP of promoting a "fake Hindu love" stance through misinformation, as he claimed that notices were served to farmers in Vijayapura district by the Waqf Board between 2019 and 2022, when the saffron party was in power.

Posting the copies of notices issued during BJP rule on 'X', Patil criticised the party for engaging in "divisive politics," rather than focusing on the State's development during its tenure. There are allegations by a section of farmers from Vijayapura district that their lands were marked as Waqf properties.

"Farmers' ancestral land was all of a sudden claimed as Waqf property, farmers will come on the streets, what should they do.... Congress is indulging in appeasing minorities and thereby dividing the country in the name of the religion, they have been doing it for long. They are trying to incite fire in the State under the leadership of Zameer Ahemed Khan (Waqf Minister)," he said.

Karnataka Industries Minister MB Patil accuses BJP of promoting a "fake Hindu love" stance through misinformation, on Tuesday *PHOTO: X*

- Posting the copies of notices issued during BJP rule', Patil criticised the party for engaging in "divisive politics," rather than focusing on the State's development

"If the BJP had not taken this issue seriously, the farmers would have come to the streets. After we raised the issue they formed the task force and asked farmers to approach the Deputy Commissioner," he said.

Noting that BJP has reconstituted its fact-finding committee on the Waqf issue, that was initially set up by Vijayendra, after facing backlash from its own leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, Patil said that the addition of Yatnal and MP Ramesh Jigajinagi to the panel appears tokenistic, indicating internal struggles within the party. *—PTI*

NO FARMER WILL BE EVICTED: CM

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Following allegations by a section of farmers from Vijayapura district that their lands were marked as Waqf properties, Karnataka Chief Minister Sidddaramaiah on Tuesday said none of them will be evicted, and notices issued to them will be withdrawn. "No farmer will be evicted from their land. Yesterday Revenue Minister (Krishna Byre Gowda), M B Patil (Industries and Vijayapura district in-charge Minister) and Waqf Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan have jointly said that no farmer from Vijayapura will be evicted from their land," Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said in case notices have been issued to farmers, they will be withdrawn. The Chief Minister also said: "I will ask the Revenue Minister to look into it, nowhere farmers will be evicted." *—PTI*

2 flagship startup programmes launched in State

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Karnataka Information Technology Minister Priyank Kharge on Tuesday launched two flagship programmes -- 'ELEVATE 2024' and KAN (Karnataka Acceleration Network) -- aimed at empowering startups to tackle funding challenges and scale their operations.

Priyank Kharge *PHOTO: FB*

According to officials, ELEVATE 2024 is a grant-in-aid seed funding scheme designed to empower early-stage startups in the state. It provides grants of up to Rs 50 lakh per startup, along with extensive support, including incubation, expert mentorship, incentives, and access to venture capital networks.

- According to officials, ELEVATE 2024 is a grant-in-aid seed funding scheme designed to empower early-stage startups in the state

KAN is an acceleration network that provides mentorship, market access, and funding opportunities for growth startups across the State, with a focus on regions beyond Bengaluru, they said.

Karnataka has long been a leader in fostering a vibrant startup ecosystem, and both ELEVATE and KAN are specifically crafted to provide a structured pathway for growth, the Minister said.

"Bengaluru is home to 45 unicorns out of the 112 in the country, with a total valuation of $161B. Our goal is to break into the top three rankings in the world," he said. Kharge said the State is committed to exploring cutting-edge technologies and fostering partnerships to ensure sustainable access to clean water and sanitation for all. He was speaking at the Harnessing Innovation for a Water Secure Future summit, which aims to bring together stakeholders to address water scarcity and sanitation issues, especially in rural Karnataka. *—PTI*

ROZGAR YOJANA SCHEME

Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, Bengaluru Rural MP CN Manjunath, and Chief Postmaster General S Rajendra Kumar distribute appointment letters under the Rozgar Yojana in Bengaluru on Tuesday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

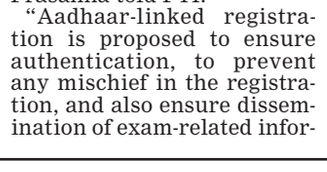
HC to pronounce order on Darshan's bail plea today

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday reserved its order on an application filed by Kannada Actor Darshan Thoogudeep Srinivas seeking interim bail on medical grounds to undergo spine surgery. Darshan is currently in jail as an accused in the Renukaswamy murder case.

Justice S Vishwajith Shetty reserved the order on Tuesday on the interim bail application after hearing detailed arguments from the actor's legal representative, senior advocate CV Nagesh, and State Public prosecutor P Prasanna Kumar.

The State presented medical reports in a sealed cover from doctors at Ballari Central Prison, where he is lodged, and the Head of the Department of Neurology at a government hospital in Ballari. Nagesh claimed that Darshan is experiencing numbness in both feet and requested permission for his surgery to be performed at a private hospital in Mysuru, with the actor covering all associated costs. *—PTI*



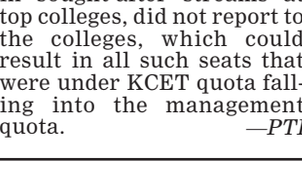
Darshan Thoogudeep *PHOTO: ANI*

ED questions ex-MUDA officer in money laundering case

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Tuesday questioned DB Natesh, a former Commissioner of the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), in connection with a money laundering case in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority in which it has booked Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his family and others, official sources said.

The federal agency had raided the premises of Natesh and another former MUDA Commissioner GT Dinesh Kumar on Monday as it covered 7-8 premises in Bengaluru and Mysuru while conducting fresh searches in the case.



DB Natesh *PHOTO: X*

Sources said the ED is recording the statement of Natesh at its office here while it has asked Kumar to join the investigation. He was not found at his premises during the Monday raids, the sources said.

Social activist and complainant in this case, Snehamayi Krishna, on Monday said he has handed over 'video evidence' to ED in support of his complaint.

The federal agency conducted the first round of raids in this case on 18 October when it searched the MUDA office in Mysuru and some other locations. It also questioned some lower-rank officials of the MUDA at its Bengaluru zonal office last week. *—PTI*

Centre delaying AIIMS establishment in Raichur: Boseraju

RAICHUR, 29 OCT

Karnataka Minor Irrigation, Science, and Technology Minister NS Boseraju on Tuesday questioned the central government's alleged delay in establishing an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here.

"The Karnataka government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, is unwavering in its commitment to bring AIIMS to Raichur. We have worked tirelessly, submitting numerous requests," Boseraju said in a statement.

According to him, Siddaramaiah has sent repeated letters to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and a dedicated team of AIIMS 'Horata Samiti' members, local MP G Kumara Naik, and district representatives had also met with the Union Health Minister in Delhi, advocating for Raichur's case.

"Yet, despite these efforts, the central government has shown little interest towards addressing the urgent need in Kalyana Karnataka (region). The Raichur District AIIMS 'Horata Samiti' (a committee fighting for the cause) has now completed 900 days of indefinite strike, with a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasising the region's collective appeal," he said. *—PTI*

TO CURB SEAT BLOCKING

KEA proposes Aadhaar-linked registration for all exams

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) has proposed Aadhaar-linked registration for students aspiring for professional course seats from next year, with an intention to put an end to the menace of seat blocking, official sources said on Tuesday.

The KEA has submitted this proposal to the Karnataka e-Governance department. "The e-Governance department is in favour of our proposal and they have sent a proposal to the Government of India for approval. We are awaiting the approval soon," KEA Executive Director H Prasanna told PTI.

"Aadhaar-linked registration is proposed to ensure authentication, to prevent any mischief in the registration, and also ensure dissemination of exam-related information to students on their mobile phones," he said.

There are also plans to also introduce Aadhaar-linked registration to recruitment exams KEA conducts for various departments, to curb impersonation and other malpractices, Prasanna said.

The move by the KEA comes in the wake of an alleged seat-blocking scam coming to light, under the Karnataka Common Entrance Test (KCET) quota, after completion of all the rounds of engineering seat allotment.

According to officials, it was found that in some cases students who opted for seats in sought-after streams at top colleges, did not report to the colleges, which could result in all such seats that were under KCET quota falling into the management quota. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

FOR ANDHRA

Andhra Pradesh Minister Nara Lokesh met with Indian-origin business leaders, including Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, and Apple VP operations Priya Balasubramaniam, during his visit to the US, on Tuesday. He also met Tesla's new CFO Vaibhav Taneja, and discussed plans for Tesla in Anantapur *PHOTO: PTI*

ED chargesheets AAP's Amanatullah in Delhi Waqf case

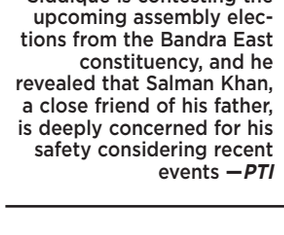
NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday filed a chargesheet against AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan over money laundering charges in a case of alleged irregularities in the Delhi Waqf Board. The 110-page supplementary chargesheet also named one Mariam Siddiqui, who was not arrested by the ED as an accused in the case. The court is likely to take it up for consideration on 4 November. Khan was arrested by the ED on 2 September from his Okhla residence and is currently in judicial custody. Special judge Vishal Gogne on Tuesday posted his bail application for hearing on 7 November *—PTI*

HC grants bail to AAP's Satyendra's aides in PMLA case

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Delhi High Court on Tuesday granted bail to two accused — Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain — in a case of alleged money laundering involving senior AAP leader Satyendar Jain. Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri granted regular bail to the duo nearly 10 days after the former Delhi minister was granted relief. A court had granted bail to Satyendar Jain, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in May 2022, citing "delay in trial" and his "long incarceration". The case pertains to allegations against Satyendar Jain of having laundered money through four companies allegedly linked to him. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has claimed that Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain were business associates of the former Delhi minister and abetted the commission of the offence. Satyendar Jain was arrested on 30 May, 2022, by the ED in the case. Ankush and Vaibhav were arrested on 30 June, 2022.*—PTI*



Noida man held for issuing death threat to Salman, Zeeshan

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

threats to Bollywood actor Salman Khan and NCP leader Zeeshan Siddique. The suspect sent a threatening message to Siddique's helpline before making a voice call in which he issued the threats. The Nirmal Nagar police station registered the case on Monday, and the accused was apprehended using technical evidence. The threatening call was made to Siddique's public relations office in Bandra East. This incident follows the tragic killing of Siddique's father, Baba Siddique, a former MLA and state minister, who was shot outside his son's office on 12 October. The Lawrence Bishnoi gang claimed responsibility for Baba Siddique's murder. Zeeshan Siddique is contesting the upcoming assembly elections from the Bandra East constituency, and he revealed that Salman Khan, a close friend of his father, is deeply concerned for his safety considering recent events *—PTI*

ADM suicide case: CPI(M)'s Divya held

Court rejects Divya's anticipatory bail plea

KANNUR, 29 OCT

CPI(M) leader PP Divya, accused in the Kannur Additional District Magistrate Naveen Babu suicide case, was taken into custody on Tuesday by the Kerala police, hours after a court rejected her anticipatory bail plea.

"She has been taken into custody," Kannur City Police Commissioner Ajit Kumar told reporters here.

Divya has been charged with abetment to suicide in the case.

Earlier in the day, the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Thalassery, K T Nissar Ahammed rejected Divya's anticipatory bail plea.

Attending his send-off function allegedly uninvited on 14 October, Divya had criticised Babu for delaying approval for a petrol pump in Chengalai for several months and remarked he had okayed it only two days after being transferred, hinting she knew the reasons behind the sudden approval.

The following day, Babu was found dead at his quarters in Kannur.

Divya *PHOTO: FACEBOOK*

Responding to queries regarding the alleged delay in taking Divya into custody despite a case being registered against her in connection with the suicide, the Commissioner said, "we did not intervene in a matter that was under active judicial consideration."

The court rejected the anticipatory bail plea of Divya, observing that "the circumstances itself disentitle her the relief of pre-arrest bail."

- Babu's wife Manjusha said, "The person responsible for destroying our lives must be arrested, and we will go to any lengths to get justice

In its order, the court, referring to various judgements of the Supreme Court and High Court, observed that the act of the petitioner (Divya) is a pre-planned and premeditated one with the sole intention of insulting and humiliating a highly reputed high ranking government official.

Divya moved the Thalassery Sessions Court on 19 October, seeking anticipatory bail after the police registered a case against her for abetting the suicide of the ADM under Section 108 of the BNSS.

Reacting to the verdict, Babu's widow Manjusha said, "The person responsible for destroying our lives must be arrested, and we will go to any lengths to get justice." *—PTI*

LINKED TO LAUNDERING CASE

J'khand liquor 'scam': ED raids IAS officer & other aides

RANCHI, 29 OCT

Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday raided premises linked to IAS officer Vinay Kumar Choubey, some state government officials and a number of liquor businessmen and middlemen as part of a money laundering investigation into an alleged excise scam in poll-bound Jharkhand. Officials said the searches are being undertaken at 15 premises in Ranchi and Raipur, the capital of neighbouring Chhattisgarh, after a criminal case was recently registered by the Jharkhand zonal office of the federal probe agency under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

ED took cognisance of 7 September FIR filed by the Chhattisgarh Police anti-corruption bureau (ACB) at Raipur naming Choubey, retired Chhattisgarh IAS officer Anil Tuteja, Anwar Dhebar, the elder brother of Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, Arunpati Tripathi, an Indian Telecom Service (ITS) officer and former special secretary of the Chhattisgarh excise department, and some others.

The premises of 1999-batch Jharkhand cadre IAS officer Choubey, currently the secretary of Jharkhand Panchayati Raj department, joint secretary of excise department of the state Gajendra Singh, liquor traders and linked persons are being searched, the officials said.

Tripathi prepared a draft of the Indian and foreign liquor sales policy applicable in Chhattisgarh and presented the same to the Jharkhand government. Based on the draft, new excise rules in Jharkhand were notified and implemented, according to the FIR. For this, Tripathi received Rs 1.25 crore from the Jharkhand government, the police alleged. *—PTI*

MPs said that the permission to allow Delhi Waqf Board to give presentations without any approval from government was illegal *PHOTO: PTI*

Chaos at Wafq meet as Oppn MPs create ruckus

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Opposition MPs on Tuesday created a ruckus at a meeting of the joint Parliamentary committee with the Delhi Waqf Board and representatives of the Minority Affairs conveneed to discuss the 'Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024' and record their oral evidence.

MPs said that the permission to allow Delhi Waqf Board to give presentations without any approval from the government of Delhi was illegal.

Opposition MPs further alleged that the Waqf Board is under the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the ministry is working under an elected government.

Meanwhile, Pal, announced that the committee will hold a hearing with the Delhi Waqf Board and representatives of the Ministry of Minority Affairs on Tuesday to discuss the 'Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024' and record their oral evidence.

Pal responded to a recent letter sent by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal regarding bill, which had reached public domain before he received it. *—PTI/ ANI*

> **When I got injured, I had to let go of the bottle and it rolled towards the Chair. That day itself, I told the meeting that I had no intention to throw the bottle at the chairperson. I also expressed regret and said sorry four times**
>
> -Kalyan Banerjee, TMC member

'India, Spain need to build open & secure Indo-Pacific'

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

Pedro Sanchez, President of the Government of Spain, emphasized the importance of an open and secure Indo-Pacific during an event in Mumbai, highlighting the need to protect freedom of navigation amid China's assertiveness in the South China Sea.

Speaking at an event organised by the Spain-India Forum and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in Mumbai, he stated that India and Spain must collaborate to strengthen multilateral institutions and defend the rules-based international order, as power dynamics shift towards Asia, where India plays a crucial role.

Additionally, he addressed the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to transform key sectors while stressing the importance of ethical standards and international cooperation to prevent misuse. Sanchez highlighted the necessity of building AI capacity in the Global South through a network of research centres and targeted training programs to ensure equitable access to technological advancements. *—PTI*

M'RASHTRA POLL HEAT ON

Ajit: Backstabbed by Patil's inquiry in irrigation scam

PUNE, 29 OCT

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Tuesday alleged he was "backstabbed" by his close colleague and then home minister RR Patil who ordered an open inquiry against him in the alleged multi-crore irrigation scam.

Pawar claimed a file mentioning Patil's remarks ordering an inquiry was shown to him by BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis after he became chief minister in 2014.

Pawar made these claims while addressing a rally for the Nationalist Congress Party candidate Sanjay Kaka Patil who is in the fray against the late Patil's son Rohit from Tasgaon in Sangli district.

PHOTO: PTI

"Allegations were levelled against me in an irrigation scam. Attempts were made to defame me. It was decided to level an allegation of Rs 70,000 crore scam in an irrigation project. The total expenditure of salaries was Rs 42,000 crore in the project and allegation was made about irregularities of Rs 70,000 crore," Pawar claimed.

The actual expenditure for the project amounted to Rs 43,000 crore but a case was made to show that there was a scam of Rs 70,000 crore, Pawar said.

Notably, Sharad Pawar-led NCP withdrew the support to then Prithviraj Chavan-led government in September 2014 following the announcement of breaking of ties with Congress, just days ahead of the assembly elections.

Patil had served as the state home minister for a considerable time during the tenure of the Congress-NCP governments from 2004 to 2014. *—PTI*

Shaina quits BJP, joins Shinde's Sena

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

BJP spokesperson Shaina NC has resigned from her party and filed nomination as the candidate of Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena from the Mumbadevi assembly constituency in Mumbai on Tuesday.

Shaina will square off against Congress' Amin Patel from Mumbadevi, which is a part of Mumbai South Lok Sabha constituency.

BJP released the fourth list for the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections with names of two candidates in it.

The fourth list released by the BJP includes the names of Sudhir Laxmanrao Parwe and Narendra Lalchandji Mehta.

Nawab Malik files nomination as NCP candidate *PHOTO: PTI*

Parwe is being fielded from Umred (SC) while Mehta is being fielded from Mira Bhayandar.

NCP (SP) declares five more candidates

Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) on Tuesday fielded five more candidates for the Maharashtra assembly elections, upping its tally to 87.

The party on Monday released its fourth list with seven candidates for the November 20 polls. It replaced sitting MLA Anil Deshmukh with his son Salil from the Katol assembly constituency in Nagpur district.

Voting for all 288 seats will be held on 20 November in a single phase. *—PTI*

Will you split family for power: Sharad asks Ajit

BARAMATI, 29 OCT

NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar turned the heat on his estranged nephew and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar on Tuesday, virtually accusing him of breaking the family for his political ambitions.

Campaigning for his grandnephew and NCP (SP) nominee from the Baramati assembly segment, Yugendra Pawar, the Pawar senior mimicked Ajit, who a day earlier became emotional over Yugendra's candidature at a rally.

Sharad Pawar's action of pretending to wipe his eyes with a handkerchief in the middle of the speech evoked a peal of laughter from the audience.

"My parents and brothers never taught me the sin to break the house (family)," Sharad Pawar said while addressing a rally at Kanheri town near Baramati.

"He (Ajit) went to the other side to secure the deputy chief minister's post despite having served as Deputy CM four times. You got the position most of the time. If you fail to get the position only once, will you break the house (family)?" Sharad Pawar asked.

"It was said that I created a rift in the family. The sin of breaking the family was never taught by my parents and brothers. All my brothers, including Anantrao Pawar (father of Ajit Pawar), lived with me," he added.

Pawar also claimed that the Final Assembly Line (FAL) of Tata Advanced Systems and Airbus in Gujarat was to be set up in Maharashtra, but was shifted at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Sacked IAS officer Puja's dad enters fray

After unsuccessfully contesting the Lok Sabha elections, Dilip Khedkar, father of sacked probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar, has now entered the assembly poll fray as he will contest as an independent candidate from Shevgaon seat in Ahilyanagar district. This time, he has not mentioned any information related to his wife in the election affidavit, contrary to what he had done during the Lok Sabha poll. —

M'RASHTRA DyCM's ASSETS DECLARED

Ajit Pawar's assets	Sunetra Pawar (wife of Ajit Pawar) assets
Movable assets: Rs 8.22 crore including 2 cars, silver articles, FDs	Movable assets: Rs 14.57 crore
Immovable assets: Rs 37.15 crore	Immovable assets: Rs 58.39 crore

TMC accuses Shah of violating MCC

KOLKATA, 29 OCT

Trinamool Congress on Tuesday accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of violating the model code of conduct during his recent visit to West Bengal and urged the Election Commission to initiate action against him for "making political comments at an official function" in the state ahead of 13 November bypolls.

The ruling party in the state also appealed to the EC to issue a show-cause notice to the BJP leader and sought direction from the poll panel to restrain him from making "political comments" at official functions in the bypoll-bound districts. *—PTI*

'I AM A FIGHTER'

In Kerala, Priyanka attacks Modi govt

WAYANAD, 29 OCT

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday intensified her campaign for the Wayanad bypoll by accusing BJP-led Central government of trying to destroy democracy and "neglecting" the rehabilitation of the landslide-hit areas of the hill district by not providing any funds for the same.

Priyanka said the stand taken by the Narendra Modi government at the Centre indicates its lack of respect for the people and the nation and the same was evident from its policies made during the last 10 years of its governance.

Congress leader, in Wayanad for two days as part of her bypoll campaign, further said that BJP's politics was different from the kind on which the country was founded.

UDF candidate from Wayanad parliamentary constituency Priyanka Gandhi Vadra campaigns at Engapuzha, in Kozhikhode, on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

She said that the Constitution of the country emanated from politics which placed the public in the highest respect.

Later, at a corner meeting at Mampad, Congress leader said she was going to fight against this politics which thrives and succeeds in dividing people.

She said that she has seen politics all her life, and the politics of fear, anger and hatred do not benefit the common man. "It only benefits only those in power." "I have been a housewife for 30 years, so I have a loud voice. You can ask my husband, he will tell you. Also when I fight, I really fight. So, you have a fighter here for you.

On Monday, the first day of her campaigning, Priyanka launched a scathing attack on the BJP-led Centre, alleging that the values of the Constitution are constantly being subverted under its rule. The by-election will be held on 13 November. *—PTI*

J&K: Major strike stopped as 2 more terrorists killed

JAMMU, 29 OCT

Security forces on Tuesday morning gunned down two terrorists holed up in a forest area near a village in the Akhnoor sector in Jammu and Kashmir, taking the number of militants killed in the two-day-long operation near the Line of Control (LoC) to three, officials said.

Over 50 terrorists are likely present on the launching pads across the border to sneak into Jammu region, a senior Army officer said

Terming the operation 'successful", General Officer Commanding of the 10 Infantry Division Maj Gen Sameer Srivastava said the terrorists had come for a "major strike". "We were ready as we were getting information continuously," he added.

PHOTO: PTI

One of the three terrorists who fired at an ambulance that was part of an Army convoy moving near the LoC on Monday morning was killed by evening.

The other two terrorists were killed on Tuesday morning in a span of two hours after joint teams of the Army and the police launched the final assault near Assan temple in Jogwan village. *—PTI*

Blind parents stay with son's corpse in house for 4 days

HYDERABAD, 29 OCT

A visually challenged elderly couple who were found living with the body of their 30-year-old son, unaware that he died four days ago, were rescued from their house here, police said on Tuesday. With a foul smell emanating from the house on Monday, some neighbours informed the police, who reached the place and found the body of a man with the elderly couple lying in a semi-conscious state. The man was found dead in the house and he is suspected to have died in his sleep about four-five days ago, said police. The parents, both aged over 60, did not know that their younger son had died and they tried calling him up for food and water but did not get any response, the official said. With their feeble voice, it seemed their neighbours also could not hear them, he said.They were offered food and water by the police.—*PTI*

Jammu encounter costs Army its canine warrior

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

The Indian Army's four-year-old sniffer dog Phantom who was killed during a counter-ambush operation in Jammu and Kashmir's Akhnoor sector played a critical role in ensuring the containment of terrorists, officials said on Tuesday. It sustained fatal bullet injuries on Monday while attempting to protect the troops from the terrorist assault.Born in May 2020, the Belgian Malinois sniffer dog was posted to the region in August 2022 and had been a vital part of multiple high-stakes missions. The canine warrior was issued from the Remount Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre of the Indian Army. Security forces on Tuesday morning gunned down two terrorists holed up in a forest area near a village in the Akhnoor sector in Jammu and Kashmir. —*PTI*

Govt asks firms to cut price of 3 anti-cancer drugs

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

The government asked the companies to reduce prices of three anti-cancer drugs to pass on the benefit of customs duty exemption and GST reduction to the consumers. In line with the government's commitment to ensure the availability of drugs at affordable prices, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has issued an office memorandum directing the concerned manufacturers to reduce the MRP on three anti-cancer drugs, Trastuzumab, Osimertinib and Durvalumab. —*PTI*

Officials get notice as Shilpa's pics at temple goes viral

BHUBANESWAR, 29 OCT

The Lingaraj Temple administration in Odisha's Bhubaneswar issued a show-cause notice to a servitor and an official, after photos and videos of actor Shilpa Shetty visiting the shrine, where photography is prohibited, went viral. The move came following an outrage among devotees over how pictures and videos were allowed to be captured inside the temple premises, officials said. Shetty was in the state capital on Monday to attend an event, and had visited the temple in the evening, sources said. Officials said the duo was seen in pictures along with the actor. —*PTI*

Kerala blast: Devotees flee from 'ball of fire'

People suffer injuries in stampede after tragedy

KASARAGOD, 29 OCT

Hundreds of people were captivated by watching the auspicious Theyyam ritual at the Veerarkavu Temple in this northern district when a thundering explosion and a ball of fire shattered the serene atmosphere around midnight.

Shocking mobile phone footage, broadcast by television channels, revealed the severity of the accident and the distress of the helpless crowd gathered at the village temple near Neeleswaram.

In the footage, a large crowd could be seen gathered on one side of the temple, with a Theyyam artist, dressed in ritualistic red attire, performing amidst them.

A shocking burst was heard, and a ball of fire and billowing smoke appeared on the other side of the shrine, an eyewitness recalled.

People, including women and children, were seen scattering, running around, and urging others to move away.

Many of the survivors said they were yet to recover from the shock and said they still had no clarity on what happened at midnight.

In the footage, a large crowd could be seen gathered on one side of the temple **PHOTO: PTI**

"We were watching Theyyam... suddenly we heard a huge sound of explosion and then we saw a ball of fire. Soon, there was panic.. Luckily, we could move to a safer place," a young man told TV channels on Tuesday.

Everything was over within seconds. Several people suffered injuries in the stampede after the tragedy, said another eyewitness.

Another man shockingly recounted the presence of a huge crowd near the shed where the crackers were stored.

"A large number of people were present near the shed. It was really difficult for them to run away to safety when the explosion happened," he said.

The District Collector, on Tuesday, said that those who were seriously injured had 80 per cent burns.

"The safety precautions were not taken. The requirement of maintaining a minimum distance of 100m between the two was not followed. No permission was taken either for storage of fireworks," he added. —*PTI*

Pregnant worker loses child after being denied leave

KENDRAPARA, 29 OCT

A 26-year-old Odisha government employee claimed that she lost her child in the womb after allegedly being denied leave by a Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) while experiencing severe labour pain at her office in Kendrapara district.

The incident occurred on October 25 .

Barsha, an employee of the Women and Child Development Department in the district's Derabish block, said she was in her seventh month of pregnancy and felt intense pain at work.

She alleged that she requested CDPO Snehalata Sahoo and other officials to take her to hospital, but they ignored her pleas. Barsha also claimed that Snehalata mistreated her.

Later, Barsha's relatives took her to a private hospital in Kendrapara, where an ultrasound revealed that her baby had died.

She claimed that "mental harassment and gross negligence" of the CDPO led to her loss and also filed a written complaint to the district collector, demanding strict action against the Sahoo.

Reacting to the allegation, the CDPO said she was unaware of Barsha's suffering. —*PTI*

ILLEGAL IPL BROADCAST

ED raids portal for online betting on LS polls results

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Enforcement Directorate said on Tuesday it has undertaken fresh searches in a money laundering case against a website that allegedly indulged in online betting on 2024 Lok Sabha election results. The firm is also accused of illegally broadcasting IPL cricket matches.

Cash, bank deposits and silver bars worth about Rs 4 crore were seized along with various other "incriminating" documents, digital devices and immovable property-related documents during the raids conducted on 25 October in Mumbai and in Kutch in Gujarat.

The action was taken against people providing technical and financial management support to the website named "Fairplay", which was allegedly involved in illegal activities.

The money laundering case stems from an FIR of the Mumbai police cyber cell that was filed on the complaint of Viacom18 Media Pvt Limited against Fairplay Sport LLC and others for causing a loss of Rs 100 crore. ED said its probe shows that Krish Laxmichand Shah is the "key person" behind Fairplay and has registered various companies such as Play Ventures NV and Dutch Antilles Management NV at Curacao (an island country in the southern Caribbean Sea), Fair Play Sport LLC, Fairplay Management DMCC at Dubai and Play Ventures Holding Limited in Malta for the operations of the website.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Fairplay is being "operated" from Dubai, the ED found. The ED has thrice earlier conducted raids in this case beginning from June and it had seized or frozen assets worth Rs 117 crore till now, including the latest action. —*PTI*

HC junks plea seeking school admissions for Rohingyas

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Delhi High Court on Tuesday refused to entertain a plea seeking directions to enrol Rohingya refugee children in local schools, saying it was the Centre's domain.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said the matter pertained to "international issues" having ramifications on security and nationality, and therefore, the petitioner should make a representation to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Petitioner NGO, Social Jurist, submitted the Delhi government was not granting admissions to children from Myanmar.

PHOTO: PTI

The court observed "Rohingyas were foreigners" who hadn't been "officially and legally granted entry into India".

The bench referred to the law in Assam saying all foreigners there will be expelled beyond a cut-off date. "And here you are facilitating them? Tomorrow you will have a situation where they will have to be expelled," it remarked.

Advocate Ashok Agarwal, appearing for the petitioner, contended Rohingya children should be allowed to study in local schools pursuant to the right to education under the Constitution of India.

The bench, however, observed permitting school admissions would allow the foreign nationals to join the mainstream, which could not be facilitated by the court.

The bench opined courts in no other country decided on matters of citizenship and something that couldn't be done directly, shouldn't be permitted indirectly. —*PTI*

BRAWL IN COURT

Lawyers and baton-wielding police personnel came to blows in a courtroom in Ghaziabad on Tuesday after the judge called the force in to remove a group of protesting lawyers raising slogans against him over a disagreement during the hearing of a bail application. The lawyers claimed they suffered injuries as police personnel used batons on them, and police officials alleged that agitating advocates set a local police outpost on fire **PHOTO: PTI**

Scribe Langa controlled firm involved in GST 'fraud': ED

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday claimed a Gujarat-based journalist was "controlling" an accused company from whose premises unaccounted cash was seized by the state police in GST "fraud" case.

The federal probe agency said it undertook fresh searches on Sunday and raided seven premises in Ahmedabad, Surat and Bhavnagar and seized "incriminating" documents.

According to the ED, journalist Mahesh Langa was "controlling" DA Enterprises from whose premises "a large quantum of unaccounted cash" was seized by the police.

The money laundering case stems from an FIR of the Ahmedabad Police Crime Branch that was registered on receipt of a complaint from the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) against "creation of more than 200 shell entities by a group of organised criminals in order to fraudulently receive and pass-on the Input Tax Credit (ITC) at the strength of bogus invoices, without supply of any goods or services". The main accused company in this case is Dhruvi Enterprises.

Mahesh Langa works for The Hindu newspaper as its Gujarat correspondent **PHOTO: PTI**

"Dhruvi Enterprises was created based on fake documents and obtained GST registration. Later, this entity raised invoices in the name of 12 different entities including DA Enterprises," ED claimed.

The agency said enquiries were made from statutory authorities and various statements were recorded by it under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) which "could not establish the genuineness of these transactions."

Langa works for The Hindu newspaper as its Gujarat correspondent. His counsel Vedanta Rajguru was earlier quoted by The Hindu saying that the journalist is neither a director nor promoter of DA Enterprise.

Police said he was running DA Enterprise in the names of his relative and wife. —*PTI*

TIHAR WARDEN ARRESTED

Meth lab linked to Mexican cartel busted in NCR

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

A meth lab having links to a Mexican drug cartel was uncovered in Noida and five people, including a Tihar Jail warden and two Delhi-based businessmen, were arrested in it, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) said on Tuesday.

The agency said the Mexican drug cartel identified in this case is CJNG -- Cartel De Jalisco Nueva Generacion.

NCB said the lab was busted in the Kasna industrial area of Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddh Nagar district on 25 October and about 95 kg of methamphetamine, a synthetic drug, was found on the premises both in solid and liquid forms.

PHOTO: PTI

A Delhi-based businessman, found at the factory during the raid, along with the Tihar Jail warden, was "instrumental" in establishing the illegal factory-He said a Mumbai-based chemist was roped in by these people to manufacture the drug. The quality of the drug was tested by a Mexican drug cartel member residing in Delhi, officials added. An "important member" of the syndicate and "close associate" of the Delhi-based businessman was apprehended in follow-up action from Delhi's Rajouri Garden area, he said.

The agency claims to have busted at least five clandestine labs this year so far in Gandhinagar and Amreli in Gujarat, Jodhpur and Sirohi in Rajasthan and Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. In Bhopal, NCB recovered 907 kg of mephedrone and 7,000 kg of some other chemicals from Bagroda industrial estate. —*PTI*

8 from banned UNLF(P) held in Manipur

IMPHAL, 29 OCT

The police arrested eight members of the banned United National Liberation Front of Manipur (Pambei) for allegedly threatening residents and obstructing the land demarcation process in Thoubal, police said on Tuesday.

Police recovered a substantial cache of arms and ammunition from the suspects, including five AK-47 assault rifles, one M-16 rifle, and a 9mm pistol.

The arrest highlighted growing concerns among security agencies regarding escalating violence linked to the UNLF(P), despite the group having signed a ceasefire agreement with the Union government last November.

The UNLF(P), led by Kh Pambei, became the first Meitei armed group in the Imphal Valley to enter into a ceasefire agreement with the government on 29 November, 2023.

According to the police, the individuals were involved in illegal activities involving sophisticated firearms.

The police also seized 16 mobile phones and a Sports Utility Vehicle during the operation.

Security agencies have raised alarms over the UNLF(P)'s violent actions

FAKE VIDEO OF UMA BHARTI TAKING BRIBE GOES VIRAL

BHOPAL, 29 OCT

Police have registered a case after a video was uploaded on YouTube claiming that an IPS officer in disguise caught former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Uma Bharti while taking a bribe, an official said on Tuesday.

Based on a complaint by Bharti's personal secretary, the Bhopal police's crime branch registered a case against the unidentified person who uploaded the "fake" video on YouTube, assistant sub-inspector Lal Bahadur Singh said.

According to the first information report, the video showed pictures of Bharati and Karnataka cadre IPS officer Roopa Divakar Moudgil with a misleading, baseless and objectionable commentary in a male voice.

The 40-second video has the narrator claiming that the IPS officer went to Bharti's residence disguised as a maid and arrested her while she received kickbacks from a contractor, the FIR stated.

The complainant stated that this was a deliberate effort to malign the senior BJP leader's image. —*PTI*

- The 40-second video has the narrator claiming that the IPS officer went to Bharti's residence disguised as a maid and arrested her.

An anti-smog gun being used to curb air pollution at Shahjahan Road in New Delhi on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Capital chokes as Delhi's air quality dips to AQI 272

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

The national capital's air quality on Tuesday was recorded in the 'poor' category with an AQI of 272, an improvement from that AQI of 304 recorded a day ago, according to Central Pollution Control Board data.

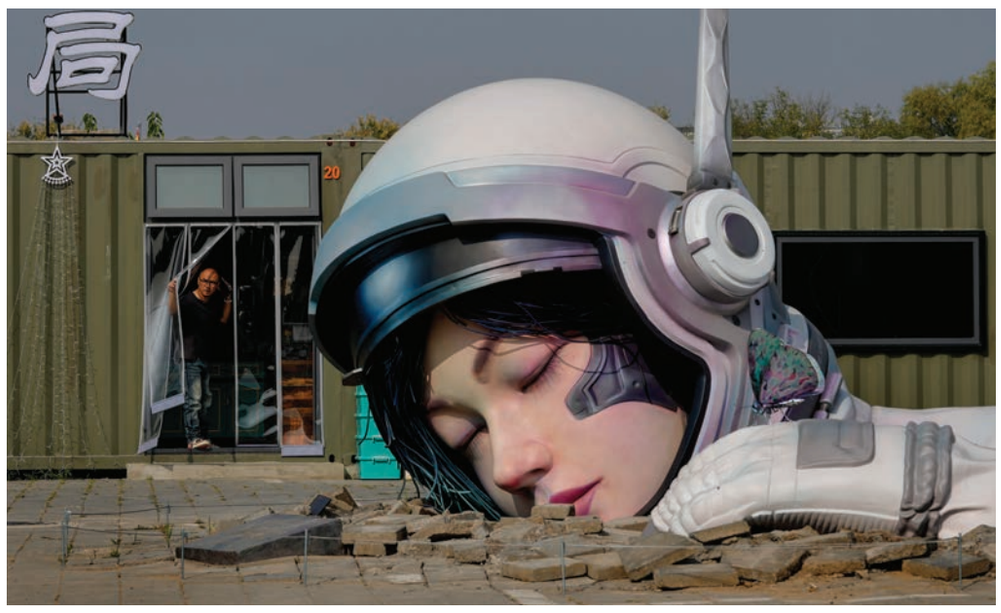
Out of a total of 40 monitoring stations, data from 37 has been shared by the department.

Among these, 10 stations—Anand Vihar, Alipur, Aya Nagar, Bawana, Jahangirpuri, Mundka, Narela, Wazirpur, Vivek Vihar, and Sonia Vihar -- were in the "very poor" category, while the remaining in the "poor" category.

The city gets blanketed in a layer of smog during the evening and early morning hours. The minimum temperature was recorded at 20.3 degrees Celsius, four notch above the season's average while the relative humidity was 85 per cent.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'. —*PTI*

- The national capital's air quality on Tuesday was recorded in the 'poor' category with an AQI of 272, an improvement from that AQI of 304 recorded a day ago



SONGZHUANG ART DISTRICT

A man looks out from a container restaurant near an art sculpture depicting a sleeping Chinese astronaut in the Songzhuang art district in eastern Beijing, on Tuesday
PHOTO: PTI

Delhi struggles to fight smog during Deepavali

Ever since they were toddlers, both of my twin girls frequently had runny noses and persistent coughs, which would magically disappear whenever we left the city," Delhi resident Bhavreen Kandhari told DW.

"This pattern was becoming common among many children, clearly pointing to the air quality as the culprit," added Kandhari, who is the co-founder of Warrior Moms, a collective fighting for children's right to clean air.

Every year, the Indian capital struggles with air pollution that reaches hazardous levels during the festival of Diwali, during which residents set off fireworks by the millions.

Locals are forced to purchase air purifiers and N95 masks as the city becomes shrouded in smog and air quality index (AQI) reach unhealthy levels. On Tuesday, Delhi authorities reported an AQI of over 300, categorized as "very poor."

Air pollution gets political

On 23 October, Supreme Court critiqued the Central government for not taking enough action to improve air quality. It also condemned the governments of Punjab and Haryana states, located to the north of Delhi, for not doing enough to control farm stubble burning.

The Central government has asked for ten more days to finalise the rules to penalise polluters.

However, the government run by BJP and Delhi's local government run by the Opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) are often at loggerheads over the issue, which has fallen into partisan bickering.

BJP's Delhi President Virendra Sachdeva blamed AAP administration for failing to control the air quality levels. AAP's Aatishi Marlena, who is the current chief minister of Delhi, told reporters that "the dirty politics of BJP is responsible for growing air and water pollution."

She said pollution in Delhi has increased due to stubble burning in the neighboring states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh (ruled by the BJP) has been a leading cause of Delhi's deteriorating air quality.

Locals are forced to purchase air purifiers and N95 masks as the city becomes shrouded in smog
PHOTO: PTI

"Air pollution in a city can't be reduced by just taking steps inside the municipal corporation boundaries as air pollution doesn't recognize any administrative or political boundaries and travels to hundreds of kilometers," Sunil Dahiya, founder of Envirocatalysts, a Delhi-based clean air advocacy group, told DW.

He added this necessitates the "adoption of regional and airshed based pollution governance and reduction."

What can be done to fight air pollution?

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee has placed a ban on fireworks until 1 January, 2025.

In addition, a "Pollution War Room" has been set up to coordinate responses to deteriorating air quality, especially in 13 hotspots identified across the city.

Over the years, many attempts have been made to reduce air pollution. Many experts agree curbing air pollution at the source is the best long-term solution.

When it comes to solutions, many experts agree that the ideal way ahead is to tackle pollutants at the source.

"Artificial rain and smog towers aren't really the solution to pollution but are only bandage solutions, the real solution to pollution lies in reducing the emission load at the primary source," said Dahiya.

"All measures such as limited usage of firecrackers, pollution control at construction sites, driving restrictions at sensitive locations will help reduce pollution," he added.

A strategy called GRAP II (Graded Response Action Plan) stage has been implemented, which places restrictions on the use of coal, firewood and diesel generators. Construction activities have been restricted and people are being asked to use public transport.

Delhi currently has two smog towers, which act as large-scale air purifiers. However, locals have questioned their effectiveness in making the air more breathable.

"Currently, most of funding is allocated to dust mitigation, which contributes only about a quarter of total pollution," Manoj Kumar, analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), told DW.

"Reducing reliance on fossil fuels, particularly coal, is a critical step in combating air pollution. Promoting non-motorized transport options such as cycling and walking, along with enhancing public transportation, can significantly reduce emissions," Kumar said.

Locals continue to breathe toxic air

Last week, Delhi hospitals reported a 30-40 per cent rise in respiratory illnesses, especially among children and the elderly.

Apart from short-term effects such as coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing and irritation of the eyes, exposure to toxic air can have several long-term outcomes.

"For those with pre-existing conditions, exposure can significantly exacerbate their health problems. The fine particulate matter can penetrate deep into the lungs, reaching the alveoli and even entering the bloodstream. This translocation poses serious risks to cardiovascular health, increasing the likelihood of stroke and ischemic heart disease, particularly among the elderly," said Kumar.

The Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) report released in 2024 by the University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute (EPIC) said air pollution in Delhi can reduce the life expectancy of residents by up to 7.8 years.

"Fixing air pollution will require work across India's clean energy transition, agriculture policy, urban mobility policies and prioritizing the protection of the existing green cover. All this has to move beyond the drafts, commissions, committees or summits. It have to reflect on the ground at community level," said Kandhari. *—DW News*

SALAR

'93% Indians support smoke-free public places'

A recent poll involving over 65,000 participants reveals overwhelming public support for 'complete smoke-free' public places in India.

Indian citizens have shown overwhelming support for 'completely smoke-free' public places, including airports, Luxury restaurants, and hotels. A recent poll conducted by the citizen-led initiative "Tobacco Free India" revealed that an astounding 92.72 per cent of respondents are in favour of making public spaces completely smoke-free. The poll, which garnered over 65,000 responses, highlights the growing concern among Indians about the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

Conducted in both Hindi and English, the poll included six key questions about smoke-free public places and the health risks associated with second-hand smoke. Across all questions, the majority supported stricter measures to protect women, children, and other vulnerable groups from exposure to toxic tobacco smoke in public areas such as restaurants, hotels, and airports.

The poll revealed strong and consistent support for smoke-free public places across various aspects. Between 83 per cent and 98 per cent of respondents favoured smoke-free environments in different settings.

When asked directly, a remarkable 98 per cent of respondents agreed that all public places should be smoke-free. This poll was conducted between 2 to 19 October on X (formerly Twitter) involving 65,272 participants.

> By making public places completely smoke free, India can protect the health of its citizens, reduce the burden of tobacco-related diseases, and create more sustainable future

97 per cent of respondents in the poll supported making airports completely smoke-free, similar to railway stations.

"While India has made significant strides in tobacco control- strictly prohibiting smoking on trains, platforms, and station premises, as well as banning the carrying or sale of tobacco products in railway campuses- the continued presence of smoking areas in airports remains a concern," said international wrestler and youth icon Sangram Singh.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed amendments to COTPA to remove smoking zones altogether--a move strongly supported by the public, as evidenced by the poll results. These efforts align with the Ministry's ongoing nationwide Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 2.0, which aims to protect young Indians from the hazards of tobacco.

According to the World Health Organisation, approximately 1.3 million Indians die each year due to tobacco-related diseases, making it a major public health crisis.

The polls also highlighted the particular vulnerability of women and children to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. Many respondents expressed concern about the impact of smoke-free environments on the health and well-being of these vulnerable groups.

Second-hand smoke imposes a significant economic burden on India. A recent study published in the Journal of Nicotine and Tobacco Research revealed that second-hand smoke causes healthcare costs of INR 567 billion annually, accounting for 8 per cent of total annual healthcare expenditures.

This figure, coupled with the staggering INR 1773.4 billion in annual economic losses due to tobacco use, underscores the urgent need for effective tobacco control measures, including comprehensive smoke-free policies.

Beyond cigarette smoking, the use of smokeless tobacco products remains a significant public health challenge in India. These products, which include chewing tobacco, gutkha, and pan masala, pose serious health risks and contribute to a range of diseases, including oral cancer, heart disease, and digestive disorders.

By making public places completely smoke free, India can protect the health of its citizens, reduce the burden of tobacco-related diseases, and create a healthier, more sustainable future. *—ANI*

Between 83 per cent and 98 per cent of respondents favoured smoke-free environments in different settings
PHOTO: ANI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

In wartime Ukraine, soccer fans bury rivalries to find calmness

At soccer games in Ukraine, crowd sizes are determined by the capacity of the nearest bomb shelter.

For the first time since the full-scale war began in 2022, the Ukrainian Premier League is holding a full season with fans present, as martial-law bans on public gatherings have been eased.

Despite the constant threat of airstrikes, Dynamo Kyiv supporters eagerly snap up the 1,700 tickets available for each home game at the 16,000-seat Valeriy Lobanovskyi Stadium. Many fans are keen to experience a rare moment of calm, free from the country's traditionally intense sporting rivalries.

While the war forced Dynamo to relocate its home matches in the Europa League to Hamburg, Germany, it uses its home stadium in Kyiv for domestic league matches.

Vitalii Kozubra brought his 9-year-old son Makar to watch Dynamo, a title contender, face mid-table Zorya Luhansk, a club displaced by Russian attacks in eastern Ukraine.

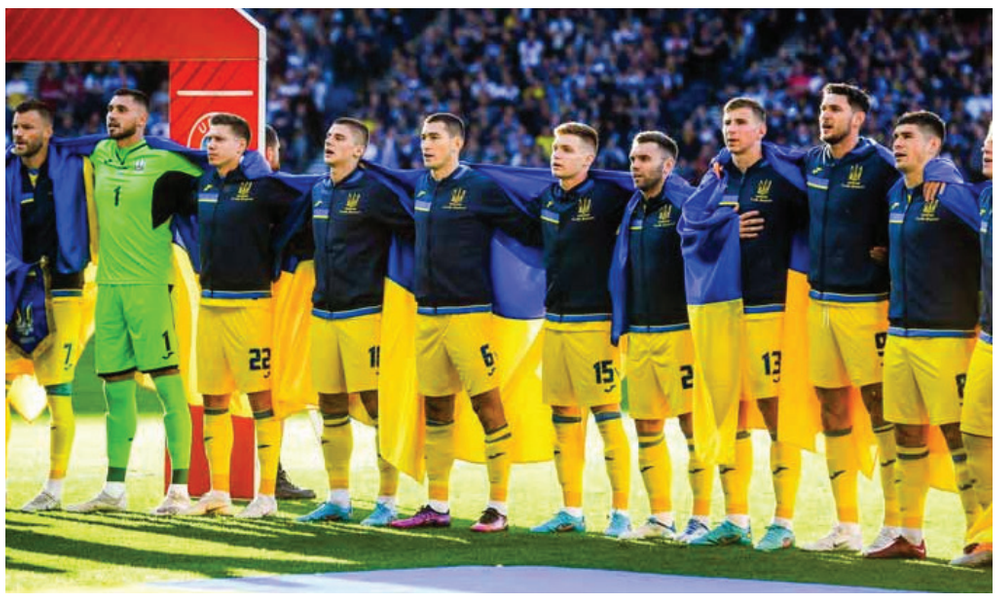
"Even though there's a war going on, this is something people can enjoy together," Kozubra said, noting the friendly atmosphere at the stadium, where Zorya fans mingled with locals. Makar marveled at the difference between watching a game in person and on television.

As the players took the field, all 22 of them draped in Ukrainian yellow-and-blue flags, the crowd, which included servicemen and families with children, erupted in applause. The stadium was alive with the sound of players' exertion and the thud of the ball. Children rushed to the touchline for autographs, drawn by the few foreign players from Brazil, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Panama who have chosen to remain despite the war.

Zorya wasn't booed once. Ukraine's 16-team top-flight league has managed to continue, despite increasing challenges. Matches are scheduled for early afternoon due to frequent power outages and the logistical challenges of travelling across Europe's second-largest country during war.

When air raid sirens interrupt play – sometimes for hours – players and fans alike head to shelters as alarms blare from loudspeakers and thousands of mobile phones.

"This season, we've been lucky in Kyiv, with no air alarms during our home games," said Dynamo club spokesman Andrii Shakhov. "But it's a different story for away games... The longest one we had lasted 4½ hours because of four air alarms."



For the first time since the full-scale war began in 2022, the Ukrainian Premier League is holding a full season with fans present, as martial-law bans on public gatherings have been eased
PHOTO: PTI

Ukrainian soccer players are subject to the draft at age 25 but clubs can apply for exemptions under business protection rules. Two teams currently play permanently outside their home field due to the war, amid broader disruption, while two others withdrew after fighting started due to stadium damage.

The country's soccer tradition dates back to its Soviet past, when it was a soccer powerhouse. In the 1980s, fan movements often became expressions of Ukrainian identity, defying Soviet authority.

After Ukraine declared independence in 1991, soccer continued to be a source of national pride through years of political and financial turmoil. Ukraine reached the quarterfinals of the 2006 World Cup and co-hosted the 2012 European Championships.

At home, supporters' groups have set aside violent rivalries for more than a decade, ever since they united to back protesters during the deadly 2013-14 uprisings against Russian influence. Later, they organized military recruitment drives to fight in the ensuing wars.

"Dexter," a red-bearded Dynamo supporter and civilian contractor for the military, explained why the truce among rival fan groups still holds.

"It became necessary because we needed to unite against a common enemy. These internal conflicts lost their relevance when people from rival fan groups ended up fighting together in the same military units," he said, while walking his dog along the banks of the Dnipro River.

He added that fan organizations are involved in nearly every aspect of the war effort, from active combat duty to fundraising, veteran support, and providing technical skills like computer programming to the military.

He and others serving in or working alongside the armed forces spoke on the condition that they be identified only by their call signs in keeping with Ukrainian military protocol.

Dynamo officials estimate that more than 80% of their pre-2022 fanbase is now serving on the front lines in eastern Ukraine or performing other military duties.

Eight hours east of Kyiv, in the Kharkiv region bordering Russia, servicemen from the 3rd Assault Brigade played a match on a field near bombed-out buildings. Many of these fighters had been recruited through soccer-related channels and acquaintances.

"Organized fans play a huge role in this war because they're highly motivated," said a serviceman with the call sign "Shtahet," a Dynamo supporter currently on deployment.

Combat medic "Poltava" noted that soccer remains a vital morale booster.

"We get together whenever we can and rent spaces to play," he said. "There's not much entertainment here, so football is our only joy."

Back in Kyiv, Dynamo fan "Escobar" was grateful to catch a game while home on leave before heading back to the front.

"This is football, it's a game," the soldier said, in uniform and wearing a camouflage bucket hat, after Dynamo's 2-0 win over Zorya. "There are no bad feelings between the teams, and it's great to see such a friendly atmosphere."

Vitaliy Buyalskyi and Maksym Braharu scored second-half goals for Dynamo, and even though Zorya players looked dejected as they walked off the field, they were still applauded by the fans. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

12 killed as boat carrying Egyptian migrants capsizes

CAIRO, 29 OCT

A boat carrying 13 Egyptian migrants to Europe has capsized off Libya's coast, killing all on board except for one person, local authorities and a Libyan group said on Tuesday. Al-Abreen, a group that provides humanitarian assistance to migrants in Libya, said on Facebook that the boat capsized 60 kilometres east of the city of Tobruk on Monday evening. One migrant survived, according to the group, which said the bodies were recovered and brought to shore. The Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration in Tobruk also confirmed the incident. In recent years, the North African nation has become the dominant transit point for migrants fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East. *—PTI*

5 dam workers killed in separatist attack in Pakistan

KARACHI, 29 OCT

Five workers were killed by suspected separatists after an attack on a dam in the Panjgur district of the restive Balochistan province on Tuesday. A spokesperson for the Balochistan government said the militants had attacked the security officials and workers stationed at the dam. "Five people were killed and two others injured," Shahid Rind said but didn't confirm if any security officials had been killed in the attack. Rind said the attack took place in the Prum area of the district early in the morning. Some television channels reported that five levies soldiers were killed in the attack. On 28 September armed men had killed seven workers in the area of Khuda Abadan in Panjgur district as they were sleeping in their quarters. The seven were labourers from other provinces working in Panjgur. *—PTI*

Polio vaccinators attacked in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, 29 OCT

Three terrorists were killed in a gunbattle when they attacked a polio vaccinators' team in Pakistan's restive northwestern province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday. In another incident, unknown militants took hostage the entire team of polio vaccinators at a dispensary in the same province, sources said here. The attack on polio vaccinators came a day after Pakistan on Monday started its third nationwide polio campaign to vaccinate 45 million children. In the first incident in Aurakzai tribal district, bordering Afghanistan, a policeman also killed in the shootout while frustrating the attack on the polio vaccinators. At least three terrorists were mowed down by the police in the fierce gunbattle and a fresh team has been rushed to the site, sources added. No group claimed responsibility for the brutal attack. *—PTI*

Knife attack in China injures 5, including 3 children

BEIJING, 29 OCT

A stabbing attack in Beijing's Haidian district injured five people, including three children, CNN reported, citing Chinese police. The incident took place at 3:20 p.m. local time (3.20 a.m. ET) on Monday, local police said in a statement. The suspect, a 50-year-old man named Tang, was apprehended at the scene. The injured were taken to the hospital for treatment. Authorities confirmed their injuries are not life-threatening, the statement added. A video shared on social media showed two children lying unresponsive and bleeding on the ground. One was receiving care from an adult; the other was still wearing a backpack, as per CNN. *—ANI*

Smoke rises from buildings hit by Israeli airstrikes in Tyre, Southern Lebanon, on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

Israeli strike in northern Gaza kills at least 93

Death toll in Gaza reaches 43,061

DEIR AL-BALAH, 29 OCT

An Israeli strike on a five-story building where displaced Palestinians were sheltering in the northern Gaza Strip killed at least 93 people early Tuesday, more than half of them women and children, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

In a separate development, Lebanon's militant group Hezbollah said it has chosen Sheikh Naim Kassem as its new top leader following the killing of Hassan Nasrallah in an Israeli airstrike last month.

The group said in a statement that Hezbollah's decision-making Shura Council elected Kassem, who had been Nasrallah's deputy leader for over three decades, as the new secretary-general. Hezbollah vowed to continue with Nasrallah's policies "until victory is achieved."

Dr Marwan al-Hams, director of the field hospitals' department at the Gaza Health Ministry, announced the toll from Tuesday's strike in the northern town of Beit Lahiya at a news conference. He says another 17 people are missing.

The ministry's emergency service says the dead include at least 12 women and 20 children, including babies. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military, which has been waging a large-scale operation in northern Gaza for more than three weeks, targeting what it says are pockets of Hamas militants who have regrouped there.

The dead included a mother and her five children, some of them adults, and a second mother with her six children, according to an initial casualty list provided by the emergency service. The Israeli military has repeatedly struck shelters for displaced people in recent months, saying it carried out precise strikes targeting Palestinian militants and tried to avoid harming civilians. The strikes have often killed women and children. *—PTI*

HOUTHIS TARGET 3 SHIPS IN RED SEA

DUBAI, 29 OCT

Yemen's Houthi rebels targeted a ship travelling through the narrow Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Red Sea on Monday, though it escaped undamaged, authorities said.

The attack ended an 18-day lull in reported assaults attributed to the Houthis, who have been attacking ships travelling through the Red Sea corridor for nearly a year now over the Israel-Hamas war raging in the Gaza Strip.

The violence has disrupted international shipping through the region, once valued at USD 1 trillion in goods annually. The vessel passing through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which separates the Red Sea from the Gulf of Aden. *—PTI*

Israel passes law banning UNRWA ops

JERUSALEM, 29 OCT

Israeli lawmakers passed two laws on Monday that could threaten the work of the main UN agency providing aid to people in Gaza by barring it from operating on Israeli soil, severing ties with it and labelling it a terror organisation. The laws, which do not immediately take effect, signal a new low for a long-troubled relationship between Israel and the UN Israel's international allies said they were deeply worried about their potential impact on Palestinians as the Gaza war's humanitarian toll worsens. Under the first law, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, or UNRWA, would be banned from conducting "any activity" or providing any service inside Israel. *—PTI*

India sends 30T of medical aid to Palestine

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Indian government reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the people of Palestine with a recent shipment of 30 tonnes of medical supplies amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. This consignment includes essential medicines and anti-cancer drugs. *—ANI*

Russia strikes Ukraine's 2 biggest cities with drones

KYIV, 29 OCT

Russian drones, missiles and bombs smashed into Kyiv and Kharkiv, Ukraine's biggest cities, in nighttime attacks, killing four people and wounding 15 in a continuing aerial onslaught, authorities said on Tuesday. Russia has bombarded civilian areas of Ukraine almost daily since its full-scale invasion of its neighbour almost three years ago, causing thousands of casualties. The Russian army is also pushing hard against front-line defences in the eastern Donetsk region of Ukraine.

In another worrying development for Kyiv officials, Western countries say North Korea has sent some 10,000 soldiers to help Russia's military campaign. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was expected to speak about that new threat at a meeting on Tuesday in Reykjavik with the leaders of Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

A Russian aerial attack struck Kharkiv, in Ukraine's northeast, at around 3 am, hitting a house and killing four people. Nearly 20 houses were damaged in the attack, he said.

Several hours earlier, Russia dropped a glide bomb on the landmark Derzhprom building in Kharkiv city centre, injuring seven people, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said.

Derzhprom, also known as the Palace of Industry, is included in UNESCO's World Heritage List as an example of modernist architecture. *—PTI*

A couple comforts each other while watching a fire in a residential building after Russian drones killed a teenager in Ukraine PHOTO: PTI

China all set for 4th crewed voyage to its space station

BEIJING/JIUQUAN, 29 OCT

China on Tuesday announced plans to launch its fourth manned mission to replace the crew of its space station and named a three-member squad, including a woman, to man the low-orbit station for the next six months.

China's crewed spaceship Shenzhou-19 is scheduled to be launched at 4.27 am (Beijing Time) on Wednesday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in the country's northwest, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced.

The launch will use a Long March-2F carrier rocket, said Lin Xiqiang, the deputy director of CMSA, at a press conference at the Jiuquan centre.

Shenzhou-19 is the 33rd flight mission of China's manned space programme and the fourth manned mission during the application and development stage of China's space station.

The Shenzhou-19 will perform a fast-automated rendezvous and docking with the front port of the space station core module Tianhe in about 6.5 hours, forming a combination of three modules and three spacecraft. While Cai who took part in the Shenzhou-14 space mission in 2022 will be the commander, Song was a former air force pilot, and Wang previously served as a senior engineer. *—PTI*

Shenzhou-19 PHOTO: X

6 DAYS TO GO

Kamala to offer an alternative to Trump-era politics in final speech

WASHINGTON, 29 OCT

Vice President Kamala Harris will pledge to Americans that she'll work to improve their lives while Republican Donald Trump is only in it for himself as she delivers her campaign's closing argument Tuesday from the same site where the former president fomented the Capitol insurrection in 2021.

One week out from Election Day, Harris' address from the grassy Ellipse near the White House is designed to encourage Americans to visualise their alternate futures if she or Trump takes over the Oval Office in less than three months.

Kamala Harris PHOTO: PTI

She hoped to sharpen that contrast by delivering her capstone speech from the place where Trump on 6 January, 2021, spewed falsehoods about the 2020 Presidential Election that inspired a crowd to march to the Capitol and try unsuccessfully to halt the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's victory and the sealing of his own defeat.

On Tuesday, aides said, Harris aims to look beyond the startling imagery of her location on the Ellipse to make a broader case for voters to reject Trump and consider what she offers. *—PTI*

Trump ally Bannon walks free from prison

DANBURY, 29 OCT

Longtime Donald Trump ally Steve Bannon is scheduled to be released from prison on Tuesday after serving a four-month sentence for defying a subpoena in the congressional investigation into the US Capitol attack on 6 January, 2021. Bannon is set to leave the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury, Connecticut, in the predawn hours and hold a news conference later in Manhattan, his representatives said. *—PTI*

Washington Post won't endorse Kamala: Bezos

NEW YORK, 29 OCT

Jeff Bezos, the billionaire owner of the Washington Post, has penned a column in his own newspaper defending the decision not to endorse US presidential candidate Kamala Harris, widely seen as a crucial stress test for American democracy. The decision not to endorse has rocked the Post. Bezos, founder of Amazon, said he had taken the decision because he was worried that people had lost trust in media. *—Agencies*

PETITION TO BAN HASINA'S PARTY WITHDRAWN

DHAKA, 29 OCT

A writ petition filed in a high court in Bangladesh seeking a ban on ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League and several other parties was withdrawn on Tuesday.

Leaders of the anti-discrimination students' movement, which led to the ouster of Hasina's 15-year regime on August 5, on Monday in a petition in Dhaka High Court sought the court's directions to prevent the Awami League and 10 other parties from conducting political activities in the country.

Court officials and lawyers said three top leaders or coordinators of the movement -- Sarjis Alam, Hasnat Abdullah and Hasibul Islam -- decided not to proceed with the petition that also questioned the past three general elections in 2014, 2018 and 2024 which installed Hasina-led Awami League to power.

The elections were staged amid allegations of massive vote manipulation or boycott by the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) led by former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia and several other parties. The movement leaders, however, preferred not to proceed with the second writ either that questioned the legitimacy of these three parliamentary elections. The petitioners' lawyers informed the bench that their clients would not proceed with the writs. The bench comprising Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Shikdar Mahmudur Raji subsequently ordered the writs be removed from the list. *—PTI*

Sheikh Hasina PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

MESSAGE FROM SPACE

NASA astronaut Sunita Williams speaks about Deepavali from ISS, at a reception celebrating Deepavali hosted by President Joe Biden, on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

Brazil is 2nd BRICS nation after India not to join BRI

BEIJING, 29 OCT

Brazil has decided against joining Beijing's multi-billion-dollar initiative becoming the second country after India in the BRICS bloc not to endorse the mega project.

Brazil, headed by President Lula da Silva, will not join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and instead seek alternative ways to collaborate with Chinese investors, Celso Amorim, special presidential adviser for international affairs, said on Monday.

"We are not entering into a treaty," Amorim said, explaining that Brazil does not want to take Chinese infrastructure and trade projects as "an insurance policy".

According to Amorim, the aim is to use some of the Belt and Road framework to find "synergy" between Brazilian infrastructure projects and the investment funds associated with the initiative, without necessarily formally joining the group, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post quoted him as saying.

The Chinese "call it the belt [and road] ... and they can give whatever names they want, but what matters is that there are projects that Brazil has defined as a priority and that may or may not be accepted [by Beijing]", Amorim said.

Amorim and the president's chief of staff Rui Costa travelled to Beijing to discuss the initiative. According to sources, they returned "unconvinced and unimpressed" by China's offers, the Post reported. *—PTI*

Lula da Silva PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

- According to Amorim, the aim is to use some of the Belt and Road framework to find "synergy" between Brazilian infrastructure projects and the investment funds associated with the initiative

OUTSIDERS 'FUELLING FIRE'

Sudan's forces escalating attacks: UN Chief

UNITED NATIONS, 29 OCT

Sudan's warring military and paramilitary forces are escalating attacks with outside powers "fuelling the fire", which is intensifying the nightmare of hunger and disease for millions, the United Nations chief said on Monday.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned the UN Security Council that the 18-month war faces the serious possibility of "igniting regional instability from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa to the Red Sea".

In a grim report, Guterres said the Sudanese people are living through numerous "nightmares" – from killings and "unspeakable atrocities" including widespread rapes to fast-spreading diseases, mass ethnic violence, and 7,50,000 people facing "catastrophic food insecurity" and famine conditions in North Darfur displacement sites.

He singled out "shocking reports of mass killings and sexual violence" in villages in east-central Gezira province in recent days. The UN and a doctors' group said paramilitary fighters ran riot in the region in a multi-day attack that killed more than 120 people in one town. Sudan plunged into conflict in mid-April 2023, when long-simmering tensions between its military and paramilitary leaders broke out in the capital Khartoum and spread to other regions including western Darfur.

The war has killed more than 24,000 people so far, according to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, a group monitoring the conflict since it started. It has created the world's worst displacement crisis, with more than 11 million people fleeing their homes including 3 million to neighbouring countries. *—PTI*

Displaced people arriving from Tambul, eastern Aj Jazirah in New Halfa locality, Kassala State PHOTO: OCHA

Rupee settles flat at 84.07 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

The rupee settled flat at 84.07 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as the support from positive domestic markets and a softening crude oil prices was negated by persistent foreign fund outflows. Forex traders said the rupee is hovering around record low levels as the strong dollar weighed on the local unit, while positive domestic equities, weak crude oil prices and suspected intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) supported the local currency at lower levels.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.08 against the greenback. It traded in a tight range and ended the day at 84.07 (provisional), unchanged from its previous close. On Monday, the rupee settled 1 paisa higher at 84.07 against the US dollar. *—PTI*

Board urges govt to ensure checks for tea from Nepal

KOLKATA, 29 OCT

Darjeeling Tea Industry (DTA) on Tuesday urged the Union Commerce ministry to ensure that tea imported from Nepal is subject to stringent quality checks under FSSAI regulations.

DTA principal advisor Sandeep Mukherjee in a letter to Union Commerce minister Piyush Goyal said that cheap and dubious tea from Nepal is being dumped into India to the detriment of the domestic industry, particularly Darjeeling. DTA claimed that Nepal tea is being allowed to be imported without mandatory FSSAI checks. The association said that there is an emergent need to clean up the Indian tea ecosystem.

"To ensure that safe and healthy tea reaches the Indian consumer in accordance with FSSAI regulations, appropriate measures are needed to be adopted to bring imported tea under its regulations", DTA pleaded. *—PTI*

Cipla Q2 net profit rises 17% to Rs 1,303 cr

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Drug major Cipla on Tuesday reported a 17 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 1,303 crore for the second quarter ended September 2024, driven by robust sales across markets. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 1,115 crore in the July-September quarter of the last fiscal. Its total income from operations rose to Rs 7,051 crore in the second quarter compared to Rs 6,490 crore in the year-ago period, Cipla said in a regulatory filing. *—PTI*

Kunal Kamra accepts Ola CEO's 'offer to work'

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Comedian Kunal Kamra says he is set to officially join Ola Electric after jokingly accepting a "job offer" from CEO Bhavish Aggarwal. In a tweet, Kamra expressed his eagerness to work with the company, noting he already feels like an "Ola employee" due to frequent tagging in customer complaints. His light-hearted proposal included a service improvement plan following recent criticisms of Ola's electric scooters, where he highlighted issues like crowded service centres and a lack of qualified technicians. Kamra suggested a seven-day repair commitment for scooter issues, compensation for delays, and comprehensive insurance covAerage. He called for Ola to provide a temporary replacement scooter or daily reimbursements of Rs 500 for transport costs during delays, with additional compensation for extended wait times. ***—Salar News with Agencies***

Dhanteras sees sale of jewellery worth ₹30,000 cr

Customers opt for gold despite record high prices & volatile mkt

KOLKATA, 29 OCT

Dhanteras and Deepavali demand for gems and jewellery this year is anticipated to remain strong despite rising prices, with Deppavali sales potentially crossing Rs 30,000 crore in the domestic market, according to industry experts.

Meanwhile, gold price rose by Rs 300 to Rs 81,400 per 10g, near its record high level, in the national capital on Tuesday due to heavy demand for Dhanteras by jewellers and retailers. Silver increased by Rs 200 to Rs 99,700 per kg

Price hikes in precious metals are prompting consumers to view gold as a reliable asset, while silver is gaining popularity among people due to its relatively lower price and high industrial demand.

Some experts estimate sales growth in value terms of 10-15 per cent year-on-year this Diwali across the country, though there may be a dent in volume.

Silver has emerged as the top performer with returns exceeding 40 per cent, followed by gold at 23 per cent, significantly surpassing stock market benchmark returns.

Eastern Regional Chairman of the Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) noted a shift from diamonds to gold this year, as the popularity of lab-grown diamonds has impacted the demand for natural diamonds.

Gold continues to shine despite the record-high prices. The yellow metal prices saw an increase of 24 per cent this year but buying interest is still high amid volatile markets and geopolitical challenges, according to a report by Religare. Buyers however are cautious given the economic backdrop.

Gold has long held a special place in the Indian culture, particularly during Deepavali when families invest in gold jewellery, coins and bars as a token of wealth and luck.

In 2024, however, global economic factors and fluctuating gold prices bring added complexity to this cherished tradition. Geopolitical instability remains a driving force behind gold's resilience. Ongoing conflicts, like the Israel-Hamas war, have added to existing tensions, with disruptions to global supply chains and heightened inflationary pressures across Asia-Pacific. *—Agencies*

A woman tries gold ornaments at a jewellery showroom on the Dhanteras festival in Maharashtra's Nagpu on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

Blinkit, Zepto to deliver gold in just 10 mins

Quick-commerce platforms Blinkit, BigBasket, Swiggy Instamart and Zepto have started to deliver gold and silver coins to the doorstep this Deepavali in just 10 minutes. These services have partnered with renowned jewellers to meet the growing demand for precious metals. Blinkit has a selection of gold and silver coins from jewellers Malabar Gold & Diamonds and Joyalukkas. BigBasket has teamed up with jewellery brand Tanishq to offer exclusive gold and silver coins to customers. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Customers can redeem their SmartGold units for cash or physical gold anytime they want *PHOTO: ANI/X*

JioFinance to let users buy gold starting at ₹10

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

The non-banking financial company (NBFC) Jio Financial Services, announced on Tuesday that customers can now buy digital gold by investing in SmartGold through the JioFinance app starting with a minimum investment of just Rs 10.

According to the press release, "SmartGold offers customers a completely digital, secure, and seamless process for buying gold and redeeming their investments in exchange for cash, gold coins, or gold jewelry. Customers can now invest in digital gold anytime, anywhere, starting as low as Rs 10." Further, the release added "Customers can also choose flexible options to buy SmartGold in denominations of rupees or grams. They have the option of directly purchasing gold coins from the digital platform and having them delivered to their doorstep."

The underlying asset is stored as 24-karat physical gold in insured vaults, ensuring security and transparency, with live market prices available on the app.

Customers can redeem their SmartGold units for cash or physical gold anytime they want. The delivery of physical gold is available for holdings of 0.5 gm and above, in denominations of 0.5 gm, 1g, 2g, 5g, and 10g.

—Salar News with Agencies

Market rises on buying in bank stocks

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

Rising for the second straight session, equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Tuesday, helped by fag-end buying in banking counters and a firm trend in global markets.

The BSE Sensex climbed 363.99 points or 0.45 per cent to settle at 80,369.03. Intra-day, it fell by 583.69 points to 79,421.35.

The NSE Nifty rose 127.70 points or 0.52 per cent to 24,466.85.

Unabated buying by domestic institutional investors (DIIs) also helped in the rebound, traders said.

From the 30 Sensex pack, State Bank of India jumped 5 per cent, followed by ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, NTPC, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finance and Larsen & Toubro.

In contrast, Maruti, Tata Motors, Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel, IndusInd Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the laggards.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,228.08 crore on Monday, while DIIs bought equities worth Rs 1,400.85 crore, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the green while Shanghai ended lower.

European markets were trading higher. The US markets ended in positive territory on Monday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.66 per cent higher at USD 71.89 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark jumped 602.75 points or 0.76 per cent to settle at 80,005.04 on Monday. The Nifty soared 158.35 points or 0.65 per cent to 24,339.15. *—PTI*

Maruti Suzuki Q2 net profit dips 18% to ₹3,102 cr

Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) reported an 18 per cent year-on-year decline in consolidated net profit for the July-September quarter, with earnings at Rs 3,102 crore, down from Rs 3,786 crore last year. The dip was attributed to the withdrawal of indexation benefits and changes in the tax rate on long-term capital gains for debt mutual funds. Despite the profit fall, MSI's total revenue from operations rose slightly to Rs 37,449 crore, compared to Rs 37,339 crore in the same period last year. *—PTI*

Adani Ports Q2: Net profit rises 40% to ₹2,445 cr

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) on Tuesday reported a 37 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 2,413.54 crore for the quarter ended September 2024, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The consolidated net profit of the company stood at Rs 1,762 crore in the quarter ended on September 30, 2023, the company said in a regulatory filing. Total income in the July-September 2024-25 period increased to Rs 7,372.37 crore, from Rs 6,951.86 crore in the year-ago quarter. *—PTI*

DESPITE CRASH, FIIS STILL HAVE ₹ 73L CR INVESTED IN INDIA

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

The continuous selling by foreign investors in October has led the market to fall by 6.5 per cent this month. But this fall does not feature in the top 10 falls of Nifty since its inception in the mid-1990s.

However, the Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) outflows are at the highest ever in absolute number. So far a record of over Rs 1,05,000 crore has been withdrawn by FIIs this month.

But despite the significant outflow, the Nifty 50 index— the benchmark for India's equity market--has dropped by only about 6.5 per cent during October.

It is also to be noted that the Rs 1,05,000 crore withdrawn by FIIs represents only about 1 per cent of their total investment in the Indian markets.

According to recent data, FIIs account for roughly 16 per cent of the NSE's market capitalisation, of approximately Rs 470 lakh crore at the end of September. Even after October's selling, FIIs still have over Rs 73 lakh crore invested in the Indian markets. *—PTI*

The Rs 1,05,000 crore withdrawn by FIIs represents only about 1 per cent of their investment.

WAAREE'S STRONG DEBUT

Tycoon who began with ₹5,000 is now worth $5B

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Hitesh Chimanlal Doshi who began his journey in India's energy sector in 1985 by taking a loan of Rs 5,000 from a relative, now ranks among the world's wealthiest, with a net worth of approximately $5.2 billion following a 56 percent surge in share prices post-IPO. Nearly 40 years later, he leads the Waaree Group, one of India's largest renewable energy companies.

The recent listing of Waaree Energies Ltd., the group's solar cell manufacturing arm, on the Mumbai stock exchange has propelled the Doshi family into the ranks of the world's wealthiest.

According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Waaree Energies shares surged 56 per cent after its $514 million initial public offering, taking the Doshi family's net worth to about $5.2 billion, almost doubling the clan's pre-listing wealth.

At 57, Doshi serves as chairman and Managing director of Waaree Energies, with family members on the board. The company is India's largest solar module manufacturer, boasting a capacity of 12,000 megawatts.

A significant portion of its revenue comes from exports to the US, driven by rising demand and tariffs on Chinese solar cells.

PHOTO: X/HITESH DOSHI

According to a report by Bloomberg, He was born in Tunki, Maharashtra, Doshi moved to Mumbai to pursue his education, initially borrowing funds to trade in hardware and electronics.

His pivotal moment came during a 2007 trade exhibition in Germany, where he recognized the potential of solar energy, leading him to pivot from thermal equipment to solar-cell manufacturing.

Recent increases in government spending on infrastructure and policy reforms have supported Hitesh Doshi and other renewable energy entrepreneurs in India.

According to a government report, renewable energy constitutes nearly half of the country's total installed capacity, with solar energy representing 20% of 457 gigawatts as of October 2024.

—Salar News with Agencies.

Real estate sector raised ₹135 billion in IPOs this year

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

The companies related to real estate sector raised nearly Rs 135 billion by IPOs from the markets in 2024, highlighted a report by Colliers, an investment management company.

The strong momentum in Indian real estate is echoed in the fact that real estate IPOs have raised almost double the amount raised in 2023.

PHOTO: ANI

The report also sheds light on the ongoing momentum in the Indian real estate market, where IPO activity has picked up markedly since the pandemic.

"Since 2021, the bourses have witnessed 21 real estate IPOs, significantly higher than the 11 listings in the previous four years, during 2017-2020," the report stated.

It also highlighted that in total, 21 real estate firms have collectively raised Rs 319 billion through IPOs in the last three years, more than doubling the amount collected between 2017 and 2020. As per report the key driver behind the growth in real estate IPOs is the rising demand across the residential, commercial, and retail segments. This interest is reflected in the diversity of companies raising capital. *—ANI*

India's education market is expected to reach a valuation of USD 313 billion by 2030 *PHOTO: ANI*

Education sector to drive real estate demand: Report

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

India's education sector will generate over 4 billion square feet of real estate demand by 2034-35, according to CBRE report.

The report emphasises the sector's growth potential, with India's education market expected to reach a valuation of USD 313 billion by 2030, driven by supportive policy measures, increased urbanization, and the rise of private investments.

According to the report, student enrolments across K-12 and higher education are anticipated to rise 1.2 times to surpass 360 million by 2035.

CBRE's real estate opportunity assessment projects significant demand for educational spaces as institutions seek to accommodate these growing enrolment figures.

Currently valued at USD 117 billion, India's education sector is witnessing remarkable expansion. The K-12 segment, with 1.49 million schools and a student population of approximately 265 million, is crucial to India's education infrastructure.

The country also boasts one of the largest higher education systems globally, with 43 million students across nearly 59,000 institutions.

This growing demographic, coupled with the projected urban population of 675 million by 2035, signals a robust demand for accessible and quality educational facilities, aligning with India's long-term real estate demand. *—ANI*

IN BIG CHINA SHIFT

Apple ships $6B worth of iPhones from India

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Apple Inc.'s iPhone exports from India jumped by a third in between April and September as it exported nearly $6 billion worth of phones, according to a report from Bloomberg. This comes amid the tech giant's move to reduce dependence on China and push to expand manufacturing in India.

That puts annual exports on track to surpass the about $10 billion of fiscal 2024.

Apple has been expanding its manufacturing base in India rapidly, leveraging local subsidies, skilled labour, and the country's technological progress. India has become a key part of Apple's plan to diversify away from China amidst growing geopolitical tensions between Beijing and Washington.

iPhones account for the bulk of India's smartphone exports *PHOTO: PIXABAY*

Three key suppliers — Foxconn Technology Group, Pegatron Corp., and India's Tata Electronics—assemble iPhones in southern India. Foxconn's facility near Chennai plays the most significant role, accounting for about half of India's iPhone exports. Tata Group has emerged as an important player, producing around $1.7 billion worth of iPhones from its Karnataka plant over the last six months. Tata took over the factory from Wistron Corp. last year, becoming the first Indian company to assemble Apple's flagship devices. iPhones account for the bulk of India's smartphone exports and helped the product category become the top export to the US at $2.88 billion. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Aussie keeper batter Matthew Wade retires

MELBOURNE, 29 OCT

Matthew Wade, a T20 World Cup winner in 2021, on Tuesday retired from international cricket, and will now start working in a coaching role in Australia's white-ball set-up. Wade, a wicketkeeper batter, will join Australia's coaching staff under Andre Borovec for the upcoming T20I series against Pakistan, and the Tasmanian will also be with the group for the ODI series starting at Melbourne next week. The 36-year-old has played 36 Tests, 97 ODIs and 92 T20Is in a career that spanned across 13 years, and his last appearance for the national team was in this year's T20 Word Cup. However, Wade will continue to play domestic cricket for Tasmania and Big Bash League for Hobart Hurricanes at least for the next two seasons. —*PTI*

Williamson to miss 3rd Test against India

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Senior batter Kane Williamson will miss the third Test against India at Mumbai to ensure full recovery from a groin injury ahead of the home series versus England, starting from November 28. Williamson did not play in the first two Tests against India, which the Kiwis won to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. It also ended India's 18-series winning streak at home dating back to 2012. The final Test of the rubber will be played at the Wankhede Stadium from November 1. "Kane continues to show good signs, but isn't quite ready to jump on a plane and join us," NZ head coach Gary Stead said. Rookie pacer Harshit Rana will join the Indian squad ahead of the third Test against New Zealand in Mumbai after starring in Delhi's first outright win of the ongoing Ranji Trophy season. —*PTI*

Sinner pulls out of Paris Masters citing 'a virus'

PARIS, 29 OCT

Top-seeded Jannik Sinner has pulled out of the Paris Masters, citing a virus. The Italian player, who is guaranteed to finish the year as No. 1, said in a message relayed by organizers that he is unable to play this week. "I came very early here to prepare then I fell sick, I'm having a virus at the moment, which is going to pass the next two-three days, so body-wise I'm not ready to compete," Sinner said. Sinner is the second high-profile player to pull out of the final Masters 1000 event of the year following seven-time champion Novak Djokovic. Sinner earlier this month beat Djokovic in straight sets to win the Shanghai Masters, giving the Italian his tour-leading seventh title of the season. —*PTI*

Hylo Open 2024: Bansod advances to second round

SAARBRUCKEN, 28 OCT

A young Indian contingent, which will be spearheaded by Malvika Bansod and Sathish Kumar Karunakaran, is set to be in action at the Hylo Open 2024 badminton tournament in Saarbrucken, Germany commencing on Tuesday. She also advanced to the second round. In the absence of top Indian shuttlers including PV Sindhu, Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy and Kidambi Srikanth, the Indian youngsters will have the spotlight on them on the badminton courts of the Saarlandhalle indoor arena. Last year's quarter-finalist Malvika Bansod, 35th in the world badminton rankings, will enter the upcoming edition of the tournament as the sixth seed in the women's singles event. Sathish Karunakaran, billed seventh in men's singles, is the only other-seeded Indian at the Hylo Open this year. —*ANI*

Rodri, Bonmatí win men's and women's Ballon d'Ors

Lamine Yamal wins Kopa Trophy; Kane wins Muller Trophy

PARIS, 29 OCT

Spanish midfielders Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí won the men's and women's Ballon d'Or award for the world's best soccer player.

The 28-year-old Rodri on Monday won the prestigious award for the first time after helping Manchester City win the Premier League and being a key player in Spain's European Championship triumph. He succeeded eight-time winner Lionel Messi of Argentina.

Rodri put his hands over his face when his name was read out by former winner George Weah.

"Incredible night for me," said Rodri, who is out for the season after injuring his ACL last month and arrived on crutches to the ceremony. "One of my key things is I always try to improve every game."

The 26-year-old Bonmatí retained her award after helping Barcelona win the Spanish league, the Spanish cup and the Champions League.

Bonmatí joined Barca teammate Alexia Putellas in winning two titles since the women's trophy was first awarded in 2018. She beat her teammates Caroline Graham Hansen of Norway and Salma Paralluelo of Spain as Barcelona completed a 1-2-3.

"It's a pleasure to be here again," said Bonmatí, who received the award from Oscar winner Natalie Portman. "Thanks to my teammates and the clubs who make me a better football player every year."

Vinícius Júnior was among the four men's finalists with his Real Madrid teammates Jude Bellingham and Dani Carvajal. But no one from Madrid attended the gala in central Paris, even though Carlo Ancelotti won the coach of the year award.

While Rodri is not a flamboyant player or a prolific scorer like Messi and Ronaldo, he had a huge influence on City's team with his ability to protect the defense and distribute passes cleanly from the back.

Bonmatí scored 19 goals for the second straight season for Barca and this year has netted five in five games for Spain, taking her international tally to 26.

The Ballon d'Or was created by France Football magazine and has been awarded since 1956 for the men, and since 2018 for the women. It is voted for by journalists from the top 100 countries in the FIFA rankings. —*PTI*

Indian players celebrate after taking a wicket of the New Zealand batter, in Gujarat on Tuesday *PHOTO: X/@BCCIWOMEN*

India beat NZ to win women's ODI

AHMEDABAD, 29 OCT

Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana led by example with a fine hundred as India beat New Zealand by six wickets in the third women's ODI to win the three-match series 2-1 on Tuesday.

Chasing 233, India completed the task in 44.2 overs. Smriti Mandhana (100 off 122 balls), who wasn't able to showcase her class at the top of the order in the two previous games, made her 8th ODI hundred century, the most by an Indian in the format, while Kaur remained not out on 59 as India won the match by six wickets.

Earlier, middle-order batter Brooke Halliday struck a 96-ball 86 and lifted New Zealand from a precarious 88/5 to 232 all out.

Looking to win the series and regain some lost ground after their early exit in the recent T20 World Cup, India achieved their objective with the series win. —*PTI*

Karnataka captain Mayank Agarwal celebrates his century during the Ranji Trophy match against Bihar, in Patna, on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

Ranji: K'taka secure first win of the season

PATNA, 29 OCT

Sakibul Gani's battling century wasn't enough to prevent Bihar from succumbing to an eight-wicket loss against Karnataka, who claimed their first outright win of the Ranji Trophy season and boosted their qualification hopes with a vital six points here on Tuesday.

After declaring overnight at 287/7 with a 144-run lead, Karnataka's prospects improved early on as they dismissed both Bihar openers for just six runs in the second over of the final day. Gani, who made headlines for his triple century on debut in 2022, partnered with the experienced Babul Kumar in a defiant 130-run stand that frustrated the Karnataka bowlers. Babul's composed 44 off 111 balls (5x4) offered support, while Gani fought on, striking 15 fours and four sixes in an impressive 130-run knock that held Bihar's innings together. Only three Bihar batters -- Gani, Babul, and Jitin Yadav (15) -- reached double digits, underscoring Gani's impact on an otherwise faltering innings. With light fading fast, Karnataka's bowlers stayed composed, with Shreyas Gopal taking 4/70 for a match haul of eight wickets and pacer Vijaykumar Vyshak, recently called up for the national T20I squad, contributing 3/44 as they bowled out Bihar in 66.2 overs. —*PTI*

FORM CONTINUES

Deepti Sharma hits career-high 2nd spot in ICC ODI rankings

DUBAI, 29 OCT

India off-spinner Deepti Sharma has been rewarded for her excellent recent form as she moved up two places to reach career-high second spot in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings for bowlers on Tuesday.

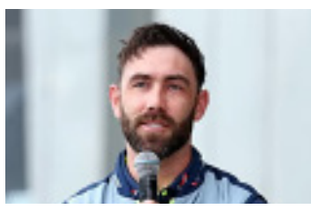
On the back of some strong performances in the recent ICC Women's T20 World Cup in the UAE, Deepti has been one of India's best players through the opening two matches of her side's ongoing white-ball series against New Zealand at home.

Deepti Sharma *PHOTO: PTI*

Deepti has three wickets from two matches against the White Ferns at a miserly economy rate of 3.42. It has seen Deepti gain two places to move to second on the table, and the senior India spinner has closed in on England tweaker and No.1 ranked ODI bowler Sophie Ecclestone.

There is also some movement outside the top 10, with the New Zealand trio of Lea Tahuhu (up three places to 12th), Amelie Kerr (up one spot to 13th) and Sophie Devine (up nine rungs to equal 30th) building on their recent success at the T20 World Cup.

Right-hander Jemimah Rodrigues (up three rungs to equal 30th) is the big winner on the ODI batter rankings from an India perspective, while Deepti (up one place to third) and Devine (up two spots to seventh) both make some ground on the latest list for ODI all-rounders. —*PTI*



Glenn Maxwell *PHOTO: PTI*

MAXWELL REVEALS WHY KOHLI BLOCKED HIM ON INSTAGRAM

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell revealed that he was blocked by star India batter Virat Kohli for mocking his shoulder injury back in 2017 during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy held in India.

Speaking at the podcast, "When I knew that I was going to Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Virat was the first guy to message me and welcome me to the team. When I turned up for the pre-IPL training camp, we obviously got chatting and spent a fair bit of time training together as you do. So I go to his social media, to follow him. Did not even think about it before that. I was like 'I cannot find him'," said Maxwell.

He revealed that someone mentioned to him that Virat probably had blocked him and after asking him, it was indeed the case. It was because Maxwell had mocked Virat's shoulder injury during the third Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Ranchi. —*ANI*

Mohun Bagan face resurgent Hyd

HYDERABAD, 29 OCT

Mohun Bagan Super Giant will face a resurgent Hyderabad FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) on Wednesday. Hyderabad enters the clash after a dominant 4-0 win over Mohammedan Sporting, ending a seven-match winless streak and eyeing back-to-back wins, a feat they last achieved between December 2022 and February 2023.

Hyderabad's head coach, Thangboi Singto, praised his team for effectively following his strategies, which helped them convert four of their 11 shots in the previous match.

The Mariners, however, have been Hyderabad's toughest opponents recently, with Mohun Bagan emerging victorious in four of their last seven encounters and keeping six clean sheets in that period. Last season, the Kolkata-based team defeated Hyderabad FC in both fixtures.

Known for their prowess in set-pieces, Mohun Bagan leads the league with six goals from such situations, three of which came from corners. Head coach Jose Molina has emphasized collective defence and teamwork as vital to his team's performance.

With the historical edge on Mohun Bagan's side, Hyderabad FC's renewed form might make this an intriguing encounter between two ISL heavyweights. —*PTI*

Pacers power Delhi to 10-wicket win over Assam

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Sumit Mathur's batting heroics coupled with pacers brilliant performance powered Delhi to a comprehensive 10-wicket win over Assam in their Ranji Trophy Group A match to notch up their first victory of the season here on Tuesday.

Sumit Mathur *PHOTO: PTI*

Courtesy left-handed batter Mathur's 112 off 230 balls, Delhi posted 454 in reply to Assam's first innings total of 330, and reduced the visitors to 44 for 3 in their second essay on Monday. On the fourth and final day, Assam was bowled out for 182 in 42 overs with the Delhi pacers doing their job to perfection. The pacers accounted for eight Assam batters in their second innings at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

Just after the start of the day, Assam lost three quick wickets for the addition of a mere one run. Sibsankar Roy (4), Bhargav Dutta (0) and captain Denish Das (1), who retired hurt on Monday but came back to bat on Tuesday, were dismissed in the space of eight balls.

Number 7 batter Sumit Ghadigaonkar (76 not out off 96 balls) made a spirited late-order resistance but his colleagues did not give him company and he ran out of partners in the end. Delhi Pacer Harshit Rana, who has been named in the Indian squad for the marquee Test tour of Australia starting next month, took another wicket on Tuesday to add to the one on Monday for innings figure of 2/61. —*PTI*

Bopanna-Ebden pair gets spot in ATP Finals

NEW DELHI, 29 OCT

Premier doubles player Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden have clinched a spot in the prestigious season-ending ATP Finals, marking the Indian's fourth appearance in the tournament. The Indo-Aussie duo secured their place after Nathaniel Lammons and Jackson Withrow were eliminated at the Rolex Paris Masters, finalising the 2024 field.

Joining Bopanna and Ebden in Turin's elite line-up will be Wesley Koolhof/Nikola Mektic, Kevin Krawietz/Tim Puetz, Harri Heliovaara/Henry Patten, Marcelo Arevalo/Mate Pavic, Marcel Granollers/Horacio Zeballos, Simone Bolelli/Andrea Vavassori, and Max Purcell/Jordan Thompson.

The ATP Finals, set for November 10-17 at the Inalpi Arena, feature only the top eight doubles teams globally. Bopanna and Ebden launched their season with a bang, winning the Australian Open as the Indian became the oldest man at 43 years, 331 days to become a world No 1.

Bopanna and Ebden later added a Miami Open title to their resume.

This marks their second consecutive year qualifying for the ATP Finals; in 2023, they reached the semi-finals in Turin before being defeated by Granollers and Zeballos.

For Bopanna, this event holds special significance as he eyes his maiden ATP Finals title.

Previously, he finished as the finalist in 2012 with Mahesh Bhupathi and again in 2015 alongside Florin Mergea. —*PTI*

Premier doubles player Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden *PHOTO: PTI*

SULTAN OF JOHOR CUP

Happy to win bronze: Jr hockey cap Amir Ali

BENGALURU, 29 OCT

Indian junior men's hockey team captain Amir Ali admitted that they were disappointed after failing to qualify for the final of the Sultan of Johor Cup but said a bronze medal was much better than returning home empty-handed. India beat New Zealand in a tense shoot-out in the third-fourth place classification match to clinch the bronze medal in the junior tournament at Johor Bahru, Malaysia last Saturday.

Amir Ali *PHOTO: PTI*

"We were very disappointed after missing out on the final due to goal difference. But as a team, we decided, there was no point looking back at what we could have done better. We decided to focus on the bronze-medal match and told ourselves that we can't go back home empty handed," Ali said after returning here.

India remained on top of the points table throughout the tournament with strong performances against Japan (4-2), Great Britain (6-4), Malaysia (4-2), and New Zealand (3-3). But the 0-4 loss against eventual winners Australia cost them dearly as they missed out on a spot in the final to Great Britain by one-goal difference. It was the legendary goalkeeper PR Sreejesh's first assignment as coach of the Indian junior men's team.

"Sree bhai (Sreejesh) is the best mentor we could have had. He would talk to us about going step by step in the match and even during half-time breaks, when we would be behind in scoreline, he would tell us how we can go about without being under pressure."

Back to business at SAI, Bengaluru, the Indian junior team has now set its focus on winning the Junior Asia Cup title, a qualifying tournament for next year's FIH Junior World Cup.

The Junior Asia Cup begins on 26 November in Muscat, Oman. —*PTI*

IPL 2025: Shreyas Iyer, KKR begin retention talks

MUMBAI, 29 OCT

As the 31 October retention deadline approaches, IPL franchises are finalising crucial decisions ahead of the mega auctions for the 2025 season. Each of the ten teams, including Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings, and Kolkata Knight Riders, can retain up to six players - five capped and two uncapped through direct retention or the Right to Match (RTM) card. The Kolkata Knight Riders are in talks with Shreyas Iyer regarding his future amid interest from other franchises. Washington Sundar has emerged as a target for three teams, while Lucknow Super Giants plan to retain Nicholas Pooran for Rs 18 crore. Sunrisers Hyderabad will keep Pat Cummins and Travis Head but face challenges with Shikhar Dhawan's injury. Prominent names like KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant, and Rashid Khan are expected to enter the auction, while the Chennai Super Kings are set to retain Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ravindra Jadeja, and possibly MS Dhoni. As the deadline nears, fans and analysts eagerly await the decisions that will shape the league's future and the dynamics of the season.

—*Salar News with agencies*